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CARTOON AND COMIC ART STUDIES

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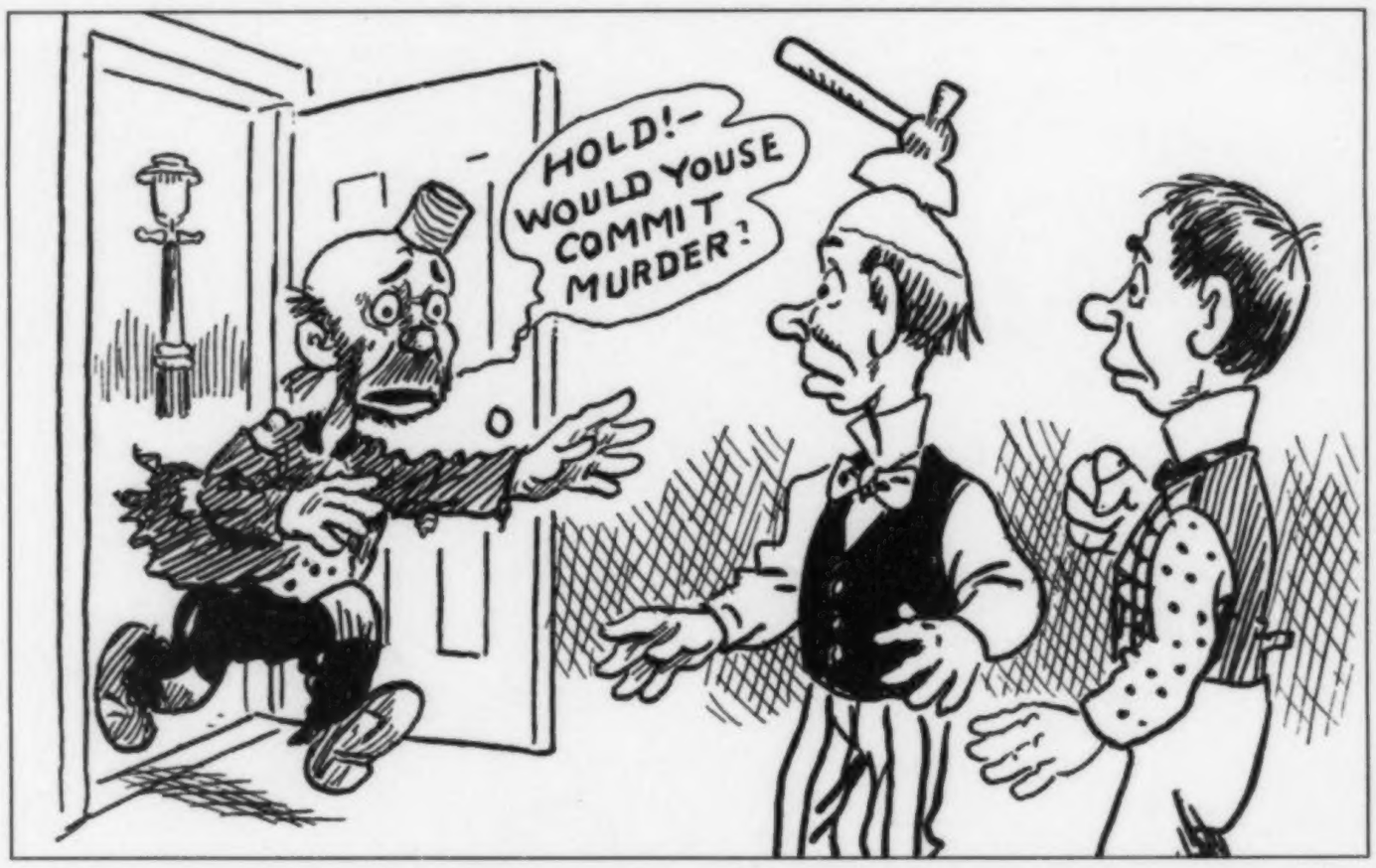

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THAT CANNON OUGHT TO BE FIRED
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Opper, Outcault and Company

The Comic Supplement and the Men who Make It

BY ROY L. McCARDELL
With Annotations by Robert C. Harvey

This article is reprinted from *Everybody's Magazine*, June 1905, 763-772. Harvey's observations are printed in the outside column of each page, linked numerically to the original text.

It is the jokes in the colored comic supplement that are aged—not the comic supplement itself. That is, if there were any jokes, they would be old; as a fact, the supplement today is composed entirely of pictures, but their subjects are aged—long-time friends with new faces. The supplement itself, however, is less than eleven years old, though it has become so familiar that we are apt to forget that it made its first real appearance on Sunday, November 18, 1894.

There had been attempts at colored supplements before that date; but they had all failed. The Recorder, then a daily newspaper in New York City, tried to print one; but the result was too horrible—the different colored inks would not stay in their right places, and the supplement was a splotch of discolor. In Chicago, during the World's Fair, two papers tried to print colored supplements; but the result was even worse than that of the *Recorder's* attempt. So the supplement of the Sunday *World* of November 18, 1894, was really the first of its kind.①

This supplement was an eight-page pamphlet, 10x18 inches in measurement, of the size technically known in newspaper offices, for some inscrutable reason, as "magazine form." The first series of colored comic pictures ever printed with a Sunday paper adorned its first page—illustrations showing a clown going picnicking with a wolf-hound. The happy pair fell asleep after a hearty meal, and were visited by an anaconda, which ate the wolf-hound. When the clown awoke, he found the snake indulging in its famous anaconda-hour of digestion; so he performed a neat surgical operation on it, by which the feet of the dog were brought through the snake's side; and then the clever clown led away the world-renowned anaconda-dog! This conceit was called "The Origin of a New Species," and was the work of Richard F. Outcault.

The *World's* comic supplement was the result of several years' work. In 1891, the present writer, then on the *World's* staff, sug-

Opper as a man of the stone-age.
A caricature by Upjohn.

Annotations for Roy L. McCardell's "Opper, Outcault and Company"

BY ROBERT C. HARVEY

By way of fleshing out the history McCardell sketches in this article, we offer the following footnotes:

① The *New York World* had been producing a Sunday supplement since the mid-1880s. It was the irascible revolutionary James Gordon Bennett at the *New York Herald* who in 1841 broke the taboo against publishing on the Lord's Day, thereby blazing the trail to the profitable Sunday supplements that, by 1890, were being published by 250 papers across the land.[1] With respect to the colored comic Sunday supplement, McCardell is a little imprecise: the *World* had been producing a comic supplement since 1889,[2] but the first colored Sunday supplement was produced in September 1893, according the *World*'s cartoonist Walt McDougal, who says he single-handedly produced all the "artwork" (not necessarily or entirely cartoons) for it.[3] But McDougal's 1893 production was not exclusively a *comic* supplement. The November 1894 supplement was a comic supplement; and it was in color. It was, therefore, "the first of its kind," as McCardell says; but when he refers to "colored supplements," not of the comic variety, he blurs the distinction he strives for.

Incidentally (speaking of firsts), McDougal also claims to be the first to do newspaper political cartoons, having sold several to the short-lived *Extra* in New York in the spring of 1884.[4] By June of that year, he was the *World*'s cartoonist: on impulse, he had dropped off at the *World* a cartoon of his that had been rejected

by *Puck*, and when the *World* printed it the next day (five columns wide on the front page), it sold so many papers that Joseph Pulitzer hired McDougal immediately. At the time, McDougal scarcely knew what he was doing: "The idea of offering a cartoon to a daily paper seemed so utterly absurd that I thrust the [rolled-up cartoon] into the hands of the elevator boy [on the ground floor of the old Western Union Building at 31 Park Row, the building the *World* occupied then] and stammered: `Give that to the editor and tell him he can have it if he wants it.' Then I went to the ball game to forget the cares, the hunger and the thirst of a poor country artist who tried to sell a picture once a month to a funny paper."[5]

But McDougal's was not the first newspaper political cartoon. William Murrell in his *History of American Graphic Humor, 1865-1938* allows that "the newspaper cartoon first became a force through Walt McDougal's efforts," but cartoons had been used in daily papers as early as March 9, 1872 (even as early as 1814, albeit an isolated instance).[6]

gested to Ballard Smith, the managing editor, that as the American public worried mostly about being amused, it might be well to try the effect on them of a comic colored supplement to the Sunday paper; but it was not until three years later that a color-press was produced that would print and "register" properly—print the different colors in the places where they should be printed, and not in the tomato-omelet style of the *Recorder* and the Chicago papers.

When finally the press was ready, several schemes were discussed for making use of it. At one time the editorial conference, composed of the heads of the editorial departments, had about decided to print a fashion supplement in color—a woman's fashion supplement, of course; but just about that time Morrill Goddard, city editor of the *World*, was made Sunday editor.

Goddard had begun as a reporter and had made a hit as a journalistic detective. As city editor he inaugurated the present "step lively, both gates" style of journalism. He was emphatically against the colored fashion supplement. He went in for the weird and wonderful in every-day life, and if things were not weird and wonderful enough for him, he made them so. It was his professional opinion that American humor, not fashion, ought to have a colored pictorial outlet. He told me—I was then on *Puck*—that he intended to try the comic-weekly idea as a Sunday supplement, and asked if I knew of any disengaged artists who could do comic work. *Puck* and *Judge* were then at the height of their popularity, and held under contract practically all the comic artists in sight. But I knew of one or two men who could do comic work, though they had no reputation for it; and suggested the name of R. F. Outcault.

An incident in the life of Opper's famous "Happy Hooligan."
By courtesy of the *New York American*.

Outcault at that time was a draftsman on the *Electrical World* and the *Street Railway Journal*; but he loved to draw "comics,"② and loathed the hard and fast restrictions of drawing working parts of dynamos to scale, and side elevations of patent automatic street-car brakes. He wanted to draw comic pictures always, and had already drawn some for *Truth*, a weekly then noted for its dashing color drawings by Charles Howard Johnson, Archie Gunn, and Granville Smith, and considered somewhat risqué for the subjects illustrated by those skilful artists. But there was little chance for him on *Truth*, and he was quite willing to give up his foothold there and join the *World's* forces. So it happened that he provided the first series ever printed in the first successful Sunday colored comic supplement.

The supplement was a success from the start; but it was not until a year and a half later that its success became enormous. Then Outcault made his first "hit." Ninety-nine times out of a hundred a paper's "hit" is accidental—caused by a picture or series of pictures that strikes the public fancy. A "hit" is the making of the most moribund of papers; it can well be imagined how one is sought and striven for by even a successful paper. Outcault's first "hit" was with the "Yellow Kid."

By that time the *Journal* had a color press as well as the *World*. It likewise produced a colored supplement, trying high-art humor at first, but without success; the public wanted Yellow Kids. So Mr. Outcault was hired away from the *World* at some fabulous sum, and took his pencil and his Kid over to the newer paper. The *World* then secured George Luks to draw Yellow Kids. Mr. Luks "bettered the instruction" of Mr. Outcault. He drew not only the Yellow Kid—whose name, by the way, was supposed to be Mickey Dugan—but added to the terror of the time by bringing forward a pair of kids younger and smaller than Mickey, and even yellower. They bore the names of the "Yellow Twins," Alex and George; and had a popularity only second to that of their jaundiced and cynical elder brother.

There were lawsuits for breaking of contracts and for infringement of copyright brought by both papers, and the comic artists profited. The suits were of importance chiefly to the two papers engaged; but the Yellow Kid gained a place in literary history, albeit himself most unliterary. For the rivalry between the *World* and the *Journal* caused papers without the attractions of Mr. Outcault's and Mr. Luks's work to describe those papers as "Yellow Kid jour-nals," and then, by dropping the monosyllable, to call them simply "yellow journals." So from Mr. Outcault's creation

One of the "Tiger" pictures for which Swinnerton is famous.
By courtesy of the *New York American*.

② The quotes around *comics* suggest that the usage McCardell is making of the term here is fairly new. By *comics* he seems to mean "comic pictures" or "comic drawings," humorous drawings or drawings with amusing captions of the kind then being published by the magazines *Puck*, *Life*, *Judge* and others. These magazines were often called "comic weeklies"; and the newspaper supplement that Morrill Goddard was undertaking to produce he presumably called a "comic weekly." I have no etymological basis for presuming this (the *Oxford English Dictionary* is not sufficiently detailed on the matter), but my guess is that the term "comics" was associated in the popular mind with both the weekly magazines (as the *OED* has it) and the humorous drawings in them. And then, once the *World* had shown the way to other papers, the term also came to embrace the colored comic Sunday supplements of daily newspapers. From this usage, it was but a short step to the use of "comics" to denominate the genre (comic strips) as distinct from the vehicle in which they appeared (Sunday supplement or daily newspaper). And once comic strips began to be reprinted in magazine form in the 1930s, the term was applied to those magazines, too—comic books became "comics."

Swinnerton's opinion of himself.
Expressed especially for "Everybody's Magazine."

has come the term "yellow journalism," with all that it implies of good and evil.

There was no longer a scarcity of comic artists; they popped up from everywhere—from the North, from the South, from the East, from the West they came. Among them were Gustave and Rudolph Dirks. The latter made the next hit with his "Katzenjammer Kids," produced for and still retained by the *Journal*—or, as it is now called, the *New York American*.③ These wicked little boys, quite evidently modeled on Busch's famous "Max und Moritz," gained at once much undeserved popularity from their habit of setting their dear old mother on fire, hitting her with clubs, turning the goat on her, tying ropes across her path to trip her, maltreating her in every way; and with her, two relatives known as "Uncle Heinie" and "Der Captain." The victims emerge somewhat damaged, but always able to inflict on the Katzenjammer Kids the same treatment that Paddy gave the drum. For four years or more the Katzenjammers have delightfully horrified readers of the *American*.④

A great deal of the spirit of "spend freely if you get results" was due to Goddard, who had seen the circulation of the Sunday *World* go up in leaps and bounds; and the Sunday editions, from being merely secondary considerations, hold-overs for the stories too prosy for the daily editions, became the money earners of all the issues. It was the comic supplement that brought about this change; and it caused the "tuning up" of all the departments to its key. For a time the three papers issuing

A Swinnerton Tiger in trouble.
By courtesy of the *New York American*.

③ William Randolph Hearst, whose *Morning Journal* in New York had been particularly vitriolic in its attacks on President McKinley (even suggesting, once, that McKinley should be shot), changed the name of the paper to the *American* in the wake of the bad feelings about his paper (including vehement charges of lapsed patriotism) that were prompted by McKinley's assassination in September 1901.[7]

④ Gustave Dirks was Rudolph's older brother, who inaugurated his cartooning career by producing single-panel cartoons for the weekly humor magazines, particularly *Judge*. He specialized in insect and small animal comedy and became popular enough that Hearst hired him, whereupon he drew *Bugville Life* for the Hearst Sunday supplement. He committed suicide in 1903.[8]

Rudolph Dirks, whose pace-setting *Katzenjammer Kids* began December 12, 1897, went on a vacation to Europe in about 1912, reportedly to give himself a respite from his cartooning labors, and while he was away, Hearst engaged Harold Knerr to draw the popular Katzies. Pulitzer (again, according to report), seeing Dirks displaced at the Hearst works, wooed and won the errant cartoonist for the *World*. And when Dirks returned to the United States, he joined Pulitzer's staff and resumed drawing his fractious wunderkind, this time calling the feature *Hans and Fritz*. During the hate-the-Hun fevers of World War I, the Teutonic names were abandon in favor of the less inflammatory "The Captain and the Kids," which continued as the name of the feature for the rest of its run.[9]

comic supplements tried humorous matter as well as comic pictures. The *Journal-American* hired "Ed" Mott, "Ned" Townsend, creator of "Chimmie Fadden," and "Phonnie" Thayer, who wrote the immortal baseball lyric, "Casey at the Bat"; R. K. Munkittrick, dean of newspaper humorists, was called in; and Tom Masson, editor of *Life*, contributed largely. The *World* ran a burlesque "Children's Corner," conducted by "Uncle Tommyrot," whose object was to get children of all ages to send him two dollars—a satire upon the infantile bunco games played by some of the staider papers, where "Uncle Georges" and "Aunt Marthas," on receipt of sums small in themselves but large in the aggregate, enrolled youthful readers in societies that permitted them to be kind to animals and flowers, and encouraged them to write in words of one syllable stories of everyday life. After this came "Old Doctor Lemonosky," who indorsed many weird and wonderful remedies—"Tincture of T-Rail," "Essence of Iron," "Health Haberdashery: or, Collars and Cuffs for Coughs and Colds." This struck a popular chord, and was successful until the patent-medicine people and the advertising physicians objected—and the "Old Doctor Lemonosky" retired from practise.

Meantime the Sunday circulations increased; and as they went up, the circulations of *Puck* and *Judge* declined. The illustrated Sunday papers next "knocked out" the various weekly editions that from the warmed-over matter of the dailies had been prepared expressly for country circulation. The country people demanded the big Sunday papers, with their magazine sections, their metropolitan sections, and, above and beyond all, their comic supplements. With the weekly illustrated papers, *Harper's* and *Leslie's* as well as *Puck* and *Judge*, went down the special Sunday papers: the *Mercury*, which without pictures had made a millionaire of its owner, H. M. Caldwell, and for half a century had gone over the country; the *Despatch*, and others. Down, too, went the family story papers as well. The *Ledger*, that had made a great fortune for the Bonners went first. Down, down, down it went, and finally it did not pay to bring it out and it died. Other papers that published "Pansy's Handsome Gentleman Friend; Or, Was He Really a Duke," and such like stories for the romance-loving and sentimental servant-girl, saw their circulation fall from five and seven hundred thousand copies a week to ten and fifteen thousand; and men that stayed with them saw their salaries go down from a hundred dollars a week to twenty-five, while writers of claptrap romance found their occupations gone.

Meantime the three papers⑤ with comic supplements realized that their patrons were spectators rather than readers—that is, that they cared little or nothing for humorous writing, however good it might be, but did care for pictures; so the jokes, verses, and sketches were stricken out, and the comic supplements became what they now are, merely collections of pictures. As matters stand to-day, the *World* and the *Journal* have the most popular comic-picture supplements, which are sold all over the country. What might be called the "mother papers" of these supplements have editions in various cities; but they sell their supplements to papers in territory not reached by themselves or their branch papers, until practically every paper that issues a distinctive Sunday edition has its comic supplement, provided by one or the other of the two original "yellow papers" of the country, or by the *Herald*, which

⑤ The "three papers" were the *New York World*, the *New York Journal*, and the *New York Herald*.

⑥ Opper is in many respects the greatest cartoonist of his generation, the only one to achieve success in all three forms of the art being practiced during his lifetime: panel cartoon, editorial cartoon, and comic strip. Born in 1857 in Madison, Ohio, he quit school at the age of fourteen to work in the village store; after a few months, he went to work as a printer's devil for the local weekly newspaper. While there, he learned to set type. Always drawing "comical sketches," he decided about a year later to go to New York where so many of the comic weeklies were published. As he recounted the experience: "My self-esteem was not so great as to rate myself a full-fledged artist. My idea was to obtain a position as a compositor in New York, to draw between times, and gradually to land myself where my hopes all centered."[10] Unhappily, he discovered that to be a compositor, he would have to apprentice himself for three years. So he found a job making window cards and other advertisements for a store. "All the leisure I had to myself," he continued, "evenings and holidays, I spent making comic sketches, and I took them to the comic papers—to the *Phunny Phellow* and *Wild Oats*. I just submitted rough sketches. Soon the editors permitted me to draw the [final] sketches also, which was a great encouragement".[11] After eight or ten months of this, he was able to make a living cartooning, and he left the store to submit cartoons and drawings to *Wild Oats*, *Harper's Weekly*, *Frank Leslie's*, and *Century* among others. In 1877, he joined *Leslie's* as a staff artist on salary, and three years later, he left for *Puck*, where he did both political cartoons and humorous ones, until he landed with Hearst in 1899. He continued drawing hard-hitting editorial cartoons, and in January 1900, he began producing his longest-lasting creation, *Happy Hooligan*, a Sunday comic strip about a pathetic but ludicrous Irish hobo with a tin can for

also syndicates its supplement. The matter for the comic supplements of these papers is prepared some five or six weeks prior to the date of publication.

If you ask me, How do comic series originate? I can only say that most of them are like Topsy in "Uncle Tom's Cabin": "They just grew." But that does not mean that the comic supplement just grows, that it is thrown together hit or miss. It is the product of trained intelligence, directed effort, and a full knowledge, within certain lines, of what is wanted. Every Sunday comic colored supplement is edited by a special man, highly paid, and responsible in proportion to his pay. He and his immediate assistants are constantly planning, weighing, eliminating. To them suggestions are made by both "insiders" and "outsiders"; readers send suggestions; professional suggesters—men who make a living by selling ideas to others—offer suggestions: other schemes are conceived in the office; the artists themselves make good suggestions. But in many cases the hard work of others is wholly unknown to and unrecognized by the public that follows appreciatively the artists' efforts.

Once received, the suggestions are considered and tried. If they please the public, they are carried on until the people weary of them; if they fall flat, they are dropped at once, like a hot potato. I have suggested some of the "Foxy Grandpas," "Alphonse and Gastons," and many others, though I can not draw a line that any paper would print as a picture. Many artists, more especially Opper and Outcault, get up their own ideas.

Mr. Rudolph Block, a well-known writer of short stories, is editor of the *American's* Sunday supplement, and Mr. Frederick Nye edits the *World's*; both are notable examples of men with good ideas and plenty of them. But the artists get all the credit, and maybe they deserve it.

As to the artists: At their head undoubtedly is Frederick B. Opper of the *Journal*. He is the Dean of the Corps by age and reputation, even though not the original comic-supplement artist.⑥ He is the most far-seeing and the hardest working. He realized that the Sunday-paper public wanted action, and a continuation of effort on the part of the comic characters it selected as its favorites. There was no action to speak of in the original "Yellow Kid." But Opper's people are strenuous. "Happy Hooligan," with his tomato can for a hat, is full of action, even though he now shares his labors with his brothers "Gloomy Gus" and "Montmorency." "Alphonse and Gaston" were always doing, or rather, trying to do something, and no one can find fault with "Maud the Mule" for sluggishness. Opper is an enthusiastic farmer, and while "resting from his work" amuses himself with laboring on his Connecticut farm. He is said to receive a salary of $20,000 a year; and besides this has royalties on his work, which is republished in book form, and has in some cases been put on the stage.

If he did not look so prosperous, he might easily be taken for a common or garden banker; but he is an acute observer, and jokes even on himself become fish for his net, as this story shows:

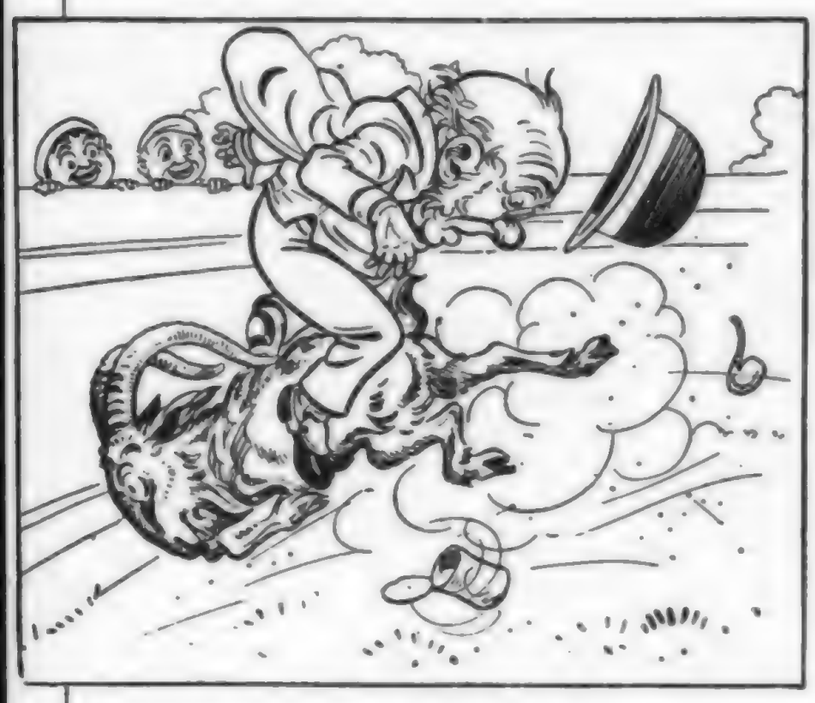
Once W. C. Gibson, then editor of *Punch*, took luncheon with Opper at his home in Bensonhurst. The host and his guest were smoking post-prandial cigars on the veranda, when the former became convulsed with laughter at the sight of one of his puppies tearing to pieces Mr. Gibson's hat. Gibson was inclined to harsh

measures, but Opper reminded him that the dog was only a puppy that knew no better; and the editor became resigned. When Gibson rose to leave, Opper offered him the choice of all his hats.

"I don't need one," returned the guest; "it was your hat, not mine!" The humor of the situation did not strike the comic artist at once; but later he made use of the incident in one of his celebrated series: "Now, Wouldn't It Jar You?" the question being, "If your dog tore up what you thought was your neighbor's hat, and you found it was your own, wouldn't it jar you?"

Opper's fad, apart from his farm, which pays too well to be really a fad, is horse-flesh. He openly voices the opinion that the only place where a man should be allowed to have an automobile is a cell in State prison.

As good a business man as Mr. Opper is Richard F. Outcault. The difference is that Opper looks after his own business matters, while Outcault employs people to see to his. At present Mr. Outcault is, as I have said, working on the *Herald*, where his "Buster Brown" has run for more than four years, and has repeated the success of his "Yellow Kid."⑦ More than any other comic-supplement character, Buster has made a hit. A lawyer and two secretaries are said to be employed constantly by Mr. Outcault to keep track of the " business end" of Buster Brown, for there are Buster Brown cigars, suits, garters, stockings, belts, sweaters; there is a succesful Buster Brown play. And in Buster's every effort, Mr. Outcault profits. He lives at Flushing, L. I., and has an income of some seventy-five thousand dollars a year—for which he has to work, remember.



Bunny Schultz's best-known character, "Foxy Grandpa."
By courtesy of the *New York Journal*.

While not a clubman in the usual sense of the word, Outcault is a prominent member of the Strollers, and vitally interested in the bur lesque productions of that somewhat Bohemian organization. His inclinations are to the theater, he has contributed largely to the club's annual burlesques, and is co-author of "Buster Brown" as a stage production. He served his apprenticeship to art in Paris, and returned with the regular art-student's outfit—a beret or soft cap, and a velveteen painting jacket. To this day, in his hours of ease, when not drawing Buster Browns or royalties therefrom, he dons this cap and jacket and strums student songs on the banjo. He is preparing himself for the stage, or says he is; but is also fond of baseball, and takes his children to the wild parts of Flushing, and instructs them in the mysteries of "Three Old Cat," as he used to play it in Ohio, when he was a "Buster" boy himself. When you see pictures of Buster Brown's mamma, you see pen and ink portraits of Mrs. Outcault, as her husband sees her.

a hat, who could be relied upon to lose at every opportunity. (The earliest *Happy Hooligan* I've seen is a half-page comic strip, with speech balloons, dated 28 January 1900, in the collection of Gordon Campbell.) Opper created many cartoon features thereafter (including *And Her Name Was Maud!* about a trouble-making mule and *Alphonse and Gaston*, whose title characters were so excessively polite as to become a national catch-phrase), but *Happy* lasted longest, ending in 1932.[12]

Opper was the first president of the Cartoonists Club that started in the early 1930s. He was also the last president of the group. While all the members could agree that Opper's age, tenure and professional stature entitled him to the honor, they could not agree on a successor. As Moses Koenigsberg tells it: "[The society] crashed into as many fragments as there were members. Each was of the unalterable conviction that he merited the chieftancy."[13]

⑦ Interestingly, Outcault was able to repeat his success. Or, perhaps more precisely, he learned from the success of the Yellow Kid how to merchandise a character, and when Buster Brown proved popular, Outcault merchandised the character with great enthusiasm.

How people look to "Gene" Carr.
Drawn especially for "Everybody's Magazine."

Here is the story of Outcault's first hit, the "Yellow Kid":

About the time that he left *Truth*, Edward Harrigan's play "O'Reilly and the Four Hundred" was running successfully in New York City. In it occurred a song, "Maggie Murphy's Home," which began with the words: "Down in Hogan's Alley." Outcault had laid the scene of a little series of "comics" in Hogan's Alley, and found that the pictures were acceptable to *Truth*. After some months on the *World*, it occurred to him that he might continue the interrupted series in the comic supplement, and he forthwith carried out his idea. Topics that held public attention were burlesqued by the dwellers in Hogan's Alley: the wedding of Miss Vanderbilt and the Duke of Marlborough was the first subject treated; then followed "the Defender-Valkyrie Yacht Races in Hogan's Alley"; the Klondike was discovered there; and similar matters were depicted by Mr. Outcault. But at first the new-old series did not make a hit. It was not until the "Yellow Kid" appeared that the series took fast hold of the public.

"Buster Brown" on the defensive.

The "Kid" came on the scene first simply as "one of the chorus," to help fill the picture, and took no prominent part. By a happy inspiration, the man who laid out the color-scheme gave a glaring yellow to the gown (really night-shirt) in which Mr. Outcault had clothed him. Some one remarked that he was a funny little mite, an odd type of the gutter-snipe; and Outcault drew him again and again, each time the color-scheme man arraying him in yellow.

Mr. Outcault emphasized the ears of the brat, and promoted him from a "thinking" to a "speaking part" by inscribing some impudent legend on his gown; and the Yellow Kid had arrived! A "Yellow-Kid" epidemic ravaged the land. The Kid appeared on buttons, on cracker tins, on cigareet packages, on fans, on show-cards; finally he was dramatized.⑧

Another notable comic artist on the *Journal-American* is Frank M. Howarth. He used to be a bank clerk in Philadelphia, but his drawings of little men and women in the ledger—not the newspaper, but the bank's—did not endear him to his employers. In a furtive manner he had been contributing to *Judge* and *Life*, and after he gave up the banking business, he took up drawing as a profession, and for seven years worked exclusively for *Puck*. Then he went to the *World*, and was finally gathered in by Mr. Hearst.

Outcault's new one, "Buddy Tucker."

Howarth owns a beautiful home in Germantown, Pa., where he does most of his work, coming to New York only two or three times a year. In summer he goes with his family to Asbury Park. He seldom cares to wander from his own fireside, however, and may generally be found at home. He originates all his own ideas; and

RESOLVED!
HERBERT SPENCER SAYS THAT "LIFE IS PERFECT ADJUSTMENT TO ONE'S ENVIRONMENT." THAT'S ME- WHY MY ADJUSTMENT TO MY ENVIRONMENT IS PERFECTLY RIDICULOUS- AND HENRY DRUMMOND SAYS "HAPPINESS IS PERFECT HARMONY WITH ONES CORRESPONDENCES" I'M THAT- MY ONLY TROUBLE IS MY BAD JUDGMENT ABOUT DOING THINGS. WHY CAN WE NOT LEARN THAT VIRTUE IS ITS OWN REWARD
BUSTER BROWN.
R.F. Outcault

"Buster Brown" and "Tige."
The drawings on this page were made by Mr. Outcault expressly for "Everybody's Magazine."

⑧ The kid in the nightshirt who became the Yellow Kid first appeared in the cartoons Outcault drew for the magazine *Truth* (the earliest of these so far discovered was published in the 2 July 1894 issue).[14] One of these was reprinted in the *World* on 17 February 1895; and this became the official "birthday" of the Yellow Kid. But the outrageous waif did not appear in yellow until the next year, when on 6 January the experiment with yellow ink occurred.

⑨ James Swinnerton is one of the trio named by Coulton Waugh as the founders of the medium.[15] Waugh defined comics as consisting of three elements: (1) a narrative sequence of pictures (2) in which speech balloons are included in the drawings, the combination spotlighting (3) a character or characters who reappear with each publication of the feature. This winning combination did not appear all at once, Waugh says, but was accumulated through the efforts of three individuals during the last decade of the nineteenth century. Swinnerton and Outcault developed reappearing, continuing characters: Swinnerton in San Francisco with a little bear cub (eventually christened Baby Monarch) devised in the image of California's state symbol to promote interest in the Midwinter Exposition in the weeks before it opened in San Francisco in January 1894; Outcault, as we have seen, with the Yellow Kid. Outcault was the first to employ a narrative sequence of pictures (according to Waugh—although he has been proved wrong since), but Rudolph Dirks, with *The Katzenjammer Kids*, was the first to deploy sequential art regularly. Again, Outcault was the first to put speech balloons within the pictures, but Swinnerton and Dirks developed the practice into a fundamental aspect of the form.[16]

Swinnerton's little bears appeared in the *San Francisco Examiner* day after day for quite some time. They were so popular that, even after the Exposition closed, they continued to appear in the "weather ears" at the top of the front page; in a box reporting temperatures and a forecast, the bear would carry an umbrella if rain were predicted or would be sunning himself at the beach. Later, Swinnerton developed a comic strip about the bears and some little kids, calling it *Little Bears and Tykes*. Still later, after the cartoonist left San Francisco (in 1899) and was working on Hearst's *New York Morning Journal*, he launched (in while on *Puck* he got up certainly three-fifths of the ideas drawn by and credited to other men. He is like his pictures in one respect, at least: he is always neatly and well dressed. Two fads possess him: one is the taking of Turkish baths, and the other the taking of illustrated comic papers. He tries to subscribe to every comic paper in the world; and when you see his weekly mail, you can easily believe that his attempt is successful. He says they give him ideas.

Other comic artists ranking with these older men are Rudolph Dirks, inventor of the "Katzenjammer Kids," James Swinnerton, "Foxy Grandpa" Schultz, "Gene" Carr, C. W. Kahles, and George McManus. These, it may be said, do not exhaust the list.

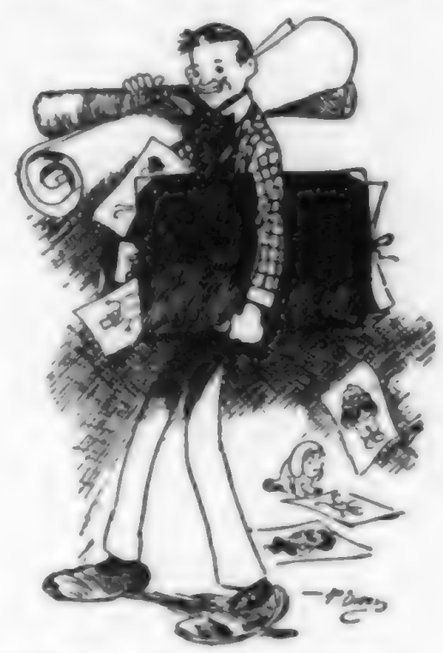
"Gus" Dirks who discovered the humorous side of bug life.
Drawn by himself.

Rudolph Dirks, who is a strong illustrator as well as a comic artist, cares far more for horseback trips through Texas and Mexico than for money-making in New York City. He is happiest when roughing it in the West somewhere, or farming, as he says, "way down South in Michigan"; in New York he is intensely retiring, and seldom seen outside of his studio.

James Swinnerton is a Californian, and like Dirks, he is a *Journal* man.⑨ He has done many good things; but his greatest hits have been his forgetful little boy, "Jimmie," who never gets what he

One of Rudolph Dirks's "Katzenjammer" pictures.
By courtesy of the *New York American*.

is sent for; and his exasperating "Little Katy," who is always interrupting her kind uncle at inopportune times. Swinnerton gets "big pay," but his money comes easily and goes easily. He is "Bohemian" in his tastes, and much prefers the society of pugilists to that of more conventional persons. His fad is sweaters, and he never wears the "boiled shirt" of civilization if he can get on a sweater. Of this article of apparel he has several hundred specimens, and most of them have added value in his eyes from the fact that they were worn and were given to him by the doughty champions of the "squared circle." He cares little for his fame or for the money that it has brought him. He was born with a facility for comic drawing, but spent his "teens" as a jockey, and his greatest pride to-day is to be taken for a pugilist. He has had set-tos—purely scientific ones—with friends and even strangers; but he is still in the "maiden class," not yet having won a battle.



Rudolph Dirks, by himself.
Drawn especially for "Everybody's Magazine."

One of the most important of the *American's* comic artists is the creator of "Foxy Grandpa," who signs himself "Bunny," but privately bears the name of Carl E. Schultz.⑩ None of the comic men look what they are, but Mr. Schultz looks less like his business than any other of the profession. Give him a long black bag, and he would be taken for a busy physician hurrying to a case. He is a big, broad six-footer; and I think he˘˘5s the best looking of all the craft.

Schultz was born in this country, but educated in Germany, where he picked up drawing. Returning in 1887 he began to draw for *Judge* in Howarth's style; and not until 1900 did he begin on his famous "Foxy Grandpa" series. One day he turned up at the *Herald* office with some drawings which depicted two boys playing pranks on their jolly old grandfather.

Now, a comic series may be good in itself, but it must also have a taking name. Mr. Randolph Lewis, then in charge of the Sunday *Herald* supplement, was the sponsor for Schultz's pictures.

For some time all of Mr. Schultz's pictures have been signed with a little rabbit—a bunny. The signature generally is part of the picture; that is, Bunny laughs or weeps, runs or dances as the key-note of the picture suggests. The signature is a case of *lucus a non lucendo.* When asked to put a signature to his drawings, Mr. Schultz thought a moment. "If I put my name on," he reflected, "people will say, 'Huh, a picture

Schultz and his "Bunny."
By Schultz.

about 1902) another animal strip called *Mr. Jack*, which featured the doings of a merry bachelor lynx that readers persisted in calling a tiger, probably in the mistaken idea that Mr. Jack was supposed to represent the Tammany Tiger, the symbol for New York City politics. (And the "tiger" label eventually got associated with the earlier bears and kids feature, giving rise to Waugh's erroneous assertion that Swinnerton's previous strip was called "Little Bears and Tigers.")

Swinnerton's most enduring creation was *Little Jimmy*, a Sunday page that he started early in 1904. It ran almost continuously until 1958, when Swinnerton at last retired from cartooning to pursue an avocation that had virtually consumed him most of his life, painting in the deserts of the American southwest.

⑩ *Foxy Grandpa* debuted 7 January 1900.[17]

by a big Dutchman!' So I'll go to the other extreme, and use a little name." Hence the "Bunny" signature and the "Bunny" as a trademark. Like Opper and Outcault, Schultz has had his pictures dramatized—or, at all events, put on the stage; and besides his salary, he gets royalties from both books and plays.

"Bunny," "Foxy," or "Grandpa" Schultz—he answers to all or any of these names—is the soul of good nature, and his greatest delight is to walk up Broadway on sunny afternoons, in all the impressiveness of six-foot well-dressed manly beauty, and be taken for a typical New Yorker. But, alas, Bunny Schultz is an inmate of Brooklyn!

Of the *World's* comic artists to-day, "Gene" Carr is the highest paid. He is only twenty-four, and his success has been rapid and remarkable. He began his work on a newspaper as office-boy in the art department of the now defunct *Recorder* when only fifteen, and there developed his talent for drawing. When the Recorder died, Carr went to the Philadelphia *Times* as a cartoonist, where he did, as he admits, very bad work. He profited by the experience, however, and returned to New York City to take a place with the *Journal*. There he originated his hit "Lady Bountiful," which he took with him to the *World* when he followed the usual custom of moving his financial home; on the *World*, too, he created the unheard-of servant-girl, Phyllis, who is always going to leave, but never goes. He has just launched a new series in the *World*, "Romeo, the Dog that Can't be Got Rid Of," which has already proved that it possesses the requisite hitting qualities. To the *Evening World* he contributed a series in black and white, "All the Comforts of Home," which made a distinct hit.

Few artists, comic or otherwise, possess Carr's beauty of line. His more serious illustrations of children, of stage and social life are extremely dainty; and on this sort of work great success is predicted for him. He is very popular among men, and owns to a weakness for good clothes. He has to admit it, for it is apparent.

With him on the *World* are C. W. Kahles, who created "Clarence the Cop" and "Mr. Butt-In," and still keeps the latter busy.⑪ Another young artist of promise is George McManus, a Chicago boy, whose "Panhandle Pete" and "Cheerful Charley" have given him a reputation.⑫ He is also noted as an illustrator of charm and power.

A typical Howarth drawing. By courtesy of the *World*.

⑪ Kahles, who created more than twenty comic strips (often doing several at the same time), is most remembered for *Hairbreadth Harry*, which first appeared in October 1906. A spoof of melodramatic heroics, *Harry* featured a lantern-jawed handsome hero and a blonde and cringing heroine perpetually in need of rescuing from a black-clad, moustache-twirling villain.[18]

⑫ McManus was actually born in St. Louis and never spent much time in Chicago. His 2 January 1913 creation, *Bringing Up Father*, introduced the world to the *nouveau riche* Irish immigrant couple, Jiggs and Maggie, a former hod-carrier and his painfully ugly wife who has social pretensions considerably above her husband's simple desire for a game of cards with his cronies and a plate of corned beef and cabbage. McManus took the concept from a play he saw as a youth in the theater his father managed, *The Rising Generation*, borrowing the play's Irish laborer who has suddenly struck it rich and who now struggles with his socially ambitious wife. But McManus never explained in the strip how Jiggs acquired his fortune. He told his long-time assistant, Zeke Zekley, though; and Zeke told me. Jiggs, it seems, worked for an extraordinarily appreciative boss when he was in the construction business. His boss gave him a dime for every hundred dollars he, the boss, made. Jiggs saved the dimes, and his frugality made him fabulously wealthy.[19]

As Mr. Outcault sees Mr. Outcault.
Drawn especially for "Everybody's Magazine."

In recounting the *World's* hits, "The Kid" must not be forgotten. This "Kid," a baby just learning to talk and walk, but able to do strenuous things, and keep his admiring relatives in hot water, is the creation of F. M. Follett, who was a cartoonist and illustrator and had a wide repute for his work on *Judge* and the *Herald* long before the era of the colored comic supplement.

Drawing comic illustrations is a business. Some of the artists are irregular in their habits, loafing for a time, and making up for lost moments by feverish and long hours; but most of them go to and from their desks as if they were bankers or bookkeepers. Their hours of work may be short; but, while they last, they're busy ones.

The comic supplement has come to stay, undoubtedly, though in details it may undergo changes. Its humor is strenuous, not to say brutal; the knock-about comedians of the old-time music-halls might easily have posed for most of the pictures that the supplement has printed in its ten years of life. The characters are thrown out of windows, clubbed, kicked, knocked down and out, laid flat by trunks dropped upon them; but they turn up smilingly the next Sunday to go through the same operations in other forms.

Such is the comic supplement of to-day. And it is blamed upon the children! For they are currently believed to cry for it, and always it is the editor's child that represents public opinion. "Have more of the 'Merry Murderers,'" says the Great Editor; "my little boy thinks they're fine." Or, "Cut out the 'Chicken-Faced Child'; my little girl says she can't bear it." And that's the way it goes; it is always the child.

Years ago "Phil" Welch, prince of newspaper humorists, wrote this joke:

> Jones (at the circus)—Hello, Smith! You here?
> Smith—Yes; I had to come to take care of my little boy.
> Jones—Where's the boy?
> Smith—He was taken sick at the last moment and couldn't come.

It's the same way with the children and the comic supplement.

Yes. It certainly is the children who like the supplement—the children of all ages, of a larger as well as of a smaller growth. They all like the comic characters, and follow their strenuous careers with interest. Were it not for them, the supplement would be as extinct as the literary quarterlies that gather dust on the shelves of the reference libraries. Oh, yes, blame it on the children.⑬

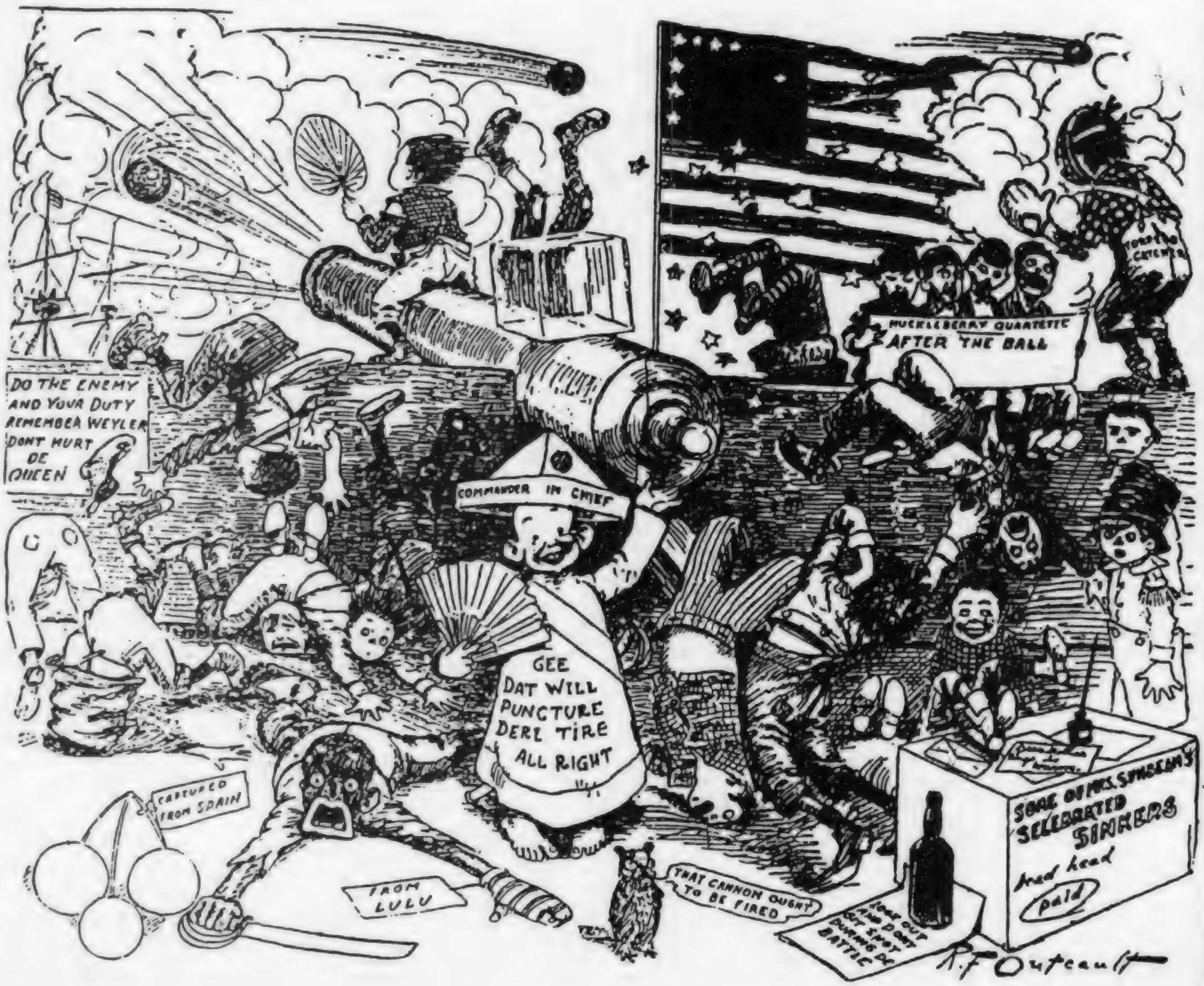
Such as I have tried to describe it is the Sunday comic colored supplement to-day—an American product pure and simple. Is American humor to be looked for in its chromatic keeping? ●

⑬ Although the funnies have for decades been presumed to be children's literature, it is worth remarking that McCardell (and, we assume, his contemporaries) knew full well that the comics were for adults as well as children. Perhaps, even, more for adults than for children.

NOTES

1. Edwin Emery, *Press In America*, 3rd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1972), 354-355.
2. Emery, *Press in America*, 356.
3. See his autobiography: Walt McDougal, *This Is the Life!* (New York: Knopf, 1926), 223.
4. McDougal, *This Is the Life!*, 94.
5. McDougal, *This Is the Life!*, 96.
6. William Murrell, *A History of American Graphic Humor*, vol. 2 (New York: Macmillan, 1938), 129.
7. Emery, *Press in America*, 389.
8. Maurice Horn, ed., *World Encyclopedia of Cartoons* (New York: Chelsea House, 1980), 197-198.
9. Coulton Waugh, *The Comics* (New York: Macmillan, 1947), 43-44; Jerry Robinson, *The Comics: An Illustrated History of Comic Strip Art* (New York: Putnam, 1974), 26.
10. Orison Sweet Marden, *Little Visits with Great Americans* (New York: Success Company, 1905), 355.
11. Marden, *Little Visits with Great Americans*, 355-356.
12. Ron Goulart, ed., *The Encyclopedia of American Comics from 1897 to the Present* (New York: Facts on File, 1990), 280; see also Marden.
13. Moses Koenigsburg, *King News: An Autobiography* (New York: F.A. Stokes, 1941), 450.
14. *The R.F. Outcault Reader* 4:4 (December 1994): 4.
15. Waugh, *The Comics*, 11.
16. Waugh, *The Comics*, 14; see also *Jimmy Swinnerton: The Artist and His Work*, by Harold G. Davidson (New York: Hearst Books, 1985), 23 and 26, in particular.
17. Goulart, *The Encyclopedia of American Comics from 1897 to the Present*, 140.
18. Goulart, *The Encyclopedia of American Comics from 1897 to the Present*, 210-211.
19. Robert C. Harvey, *The Art of the Funnies: An Aesthetic History* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 1994), 48-59.

Litigation and Early Comic Strips


DO THE ENEMY AND YOUR DUTY REMEMBER WEYLER DONT HURT DE QUEEN
COMMANDER IN CHIEF
GEE DAT WILL PUNCTURE DERE TIRE ALL RIGHT
CAPTURED FROM SPAIN
FROM LULU
THAT CANNON OUGHT TO BE FIRED
HUCKLEBERRY QUARTETTE
AFTER THE BALL
SOME OF MRS. SPRAGUE'S CELEBRATED SINKERS
Dead Head
paid
R.F Outcault

The Lawsuits of Outcault, Dirks and Fisher

BY MARK D. WINCHESTER

The quarter century following the Yellow Kid's debut saw several significant lawsuits involving the prominent cartoonists R. F. Outcault, Rudolph Dirks, and Harry Conway (Bud) Fisher. These cases are traditionally depicted as the prototypic conflict between a rebellious cartoonist and a greedy newspaper in a bitter court battle. In the model case usually described, the cartoonist loses control of the title and the ongoing feature, but retains the use of the characters under a new title or in a new feature. This perception of litigation involving early comic strips is widespread, with the newspaper left with the empty shell of the feature without its creator, and the cartoonist winning the creative rights to the essence of the work.

In contrast to the mythology surrounding these cases as battles over ownership, they were actually argued and decided on issues of libel, trademark, unfair competition, and disputed contracts. Each case had its own merits and none follows the pattern reported in several comic strip histories.

The Yellow Kid made his first of six appearances in Richard Felton Outcault's *The Huckleberry Volunteers* on 16 April 1898 (page 12). This eleven-cartoon series in the *New York Journal* commented on the tense situation between Spain and the United States.

The opinions rendered in these lawsuits offer a wealth of information about issues relating to cartoon art, copyright and trademark that is frequently overlooked in many studies.

The most legendary of all cartoon art-related cases are the *Yellow Kid* lawsuits between the *New York World* and the *New York Journal*. A substantial body of writing supports the idea of *Yellow Kid* lawsuits, but significant evidence places this notion in question. Contrary to popularly held belief, these cases may be just legend, because the reports of their existence are not documented. Several writers argue that there was a landmark case involving R. F. Outcault's *Yellow Kid* and some expand the argument further to state that the case became a legal precedent for cartoon art ownership issues in later years.[1] Roy L. McCardell's 1905 "Opper, Outcault and Company" is the earliest source found that discusses the *Yellow Kid* lawsuits:

> There were lawsuits for breaking of contracts and for infringement of copyright brought by both papers, and the comic artists profited. The suits were of importance chiefly to the two papers engaged; but the Yellow Kid gained a place in literary history, albeit himself most unliterary.[2]

McCardell's brief reference to legal action does not mention an opinion resulting from the lawsuits nor does he imply that these cases were heard through to the point of a decision. He simply notes that there "were lawsuits . . . brought."

If there were lawsuits for the breaking of contracts and infringement of copyright, then the *New York World* must have sued Outcault specifically at a time when entire staffs were purchased from one newspaper to work at another. If McCardell's story is accurate, then the *New York World* must also have sued the *New York Journal* for copyright infringement over the *Yellow Kid* property (with the *Journal* counter suing). However, at that time cartoon art was perceived as a static form (at best, illustrations linked by a common theme) rather than a dynamic serial feature where characters, relationships, and situations developed over time through a series of images.[3]

Edward Pinkowski's 1953 *Forgotten Fathers* elaborates on McCardell's story:

> When required to boost the Yellow Kid three times each Sunday, he [Outcault] almost quit the Hearst paper. He didn't know from one week to the next what his next comic strip would involve. The kid of his exuberant fancy began to fade. Luckily for him the courts, after a bitter legal battle between Hearst and

Detail from "A Snowball in Hogan's Alley," 28 December 1896. Illustration courtesy of Richard D. Olson. George Luks's *Yellow Kid* appeared in the *New York World's McFadden's Row of Flats* immediately following Outcault's departure for the *New York Journal* in late 1896.

Detail from H. B. Eddy's "A Feast of Reason and a Flow of Sparkling Humor" (*New York Journal*, 30 October 1896, 2), an advertisement used to promote the *Journal*'s Sunday comic supplement.

Pulitzer, ordered Hearst to transfer the Yellow Kid to the *New York World*. Taking it off his hands saved the artist from going entirely dry.[4]

Bill Blackbeard expands Pinkowski's version:

> The furor kicked up by the widely publicized legal battle between the *World* and the *Journal* over the rights to the *Hogan's Alley* characters (which resulted in Outcault retaining the right to continue the characters and the *World* holding control of the *Hogan's Alley* name and figures as well) irked him [Outcault] also.[5]

The flaws in Pinkowski's version of the story can be documented as a distortion of fact. Both Coulton Waugh and Stephen Becker note that Pulitzer hired George Luks to continue the feature because he had a legal right to do so, and neither writer suggests any litigation connected with this decision.[6] Furthermore, Pulitzer's *New York World* ended its regular use of the *Yellow Kid* prior to the cessation of the feature in the *New York Journal*. Another flaw in the concept of a "widely publicized

IS HE AN ORPHAN?—NIT!

Charles Greening Bush's "Is He an Orphan?—Nit!" (*New York Journal*, 6 November 1896, 2) was inspired by a report in the *New York Telegram* of a "young person . . . found wandering aimlessly about Herald Square late Tuesday night. He wore a coat made of Evening Telegrams, and said he had shaken the Popocratic party. So far very little has been learned concerning his antecedents." The *Journal* added this illustration and the comment that "upon being reprimanded the Kid said: 'Naw; I was lookin' for de Herald's New High Water Mark.'"

legal battle" is that Outcault abandoned the location "Hogan's Alley" (*New York World*) for the new location of "McFadden's Row of Flats" (*New York Journal*). It is, therefore, very unlikely that any of the parties involved contested the use of "Hogan's Alley" as a location or as the title of the feature as mentioned above. Blackbeard supports the idea that Outcault retained the right to his characters, when evidence suggests that this would not have granted Outcault any rights over, or protections from, other artists who chose to draw the characters. As interpreted at that time, copyright protected specific drawings, but did not protect an artist/creator from the use by someone else of established characters in their original drawings. At the turn of the century, a cartoonist was viewed as performing work for hire, selling services and a product to a larger corporate entity and being duly compensated by the corporation. Cartoon art was not distinguished from other forms of illustration and was subject to the protections offered for drawings and photographs that appeared in newspapers.

One of the more recent assertions about the significance of the alleged *Yellow Kid* case was made by Richard Marschall:

> Luks's valiant attempt at imitation notwithstanding, Joseph Pulitzer sued to stop Outcault from drawing the *Yellow Kid* for Hearst's *Journal*. The result of the notorious court case was that Outcault could draw his character for whomever he wished, while publisher Pulitzer could continue the *feature* with whatever artist he chose to employ. So New York had two Yellow Kids—one in *Hogan's Alley* in the *World* and one in the *Yellow Kid* in the *Journal*. (Since the legal issues revolved around likenesses and distinguishing characteristics, Luks's character for a few weeks wore bloomers instead of the gown and was once even green instead of yellow!)[7]

Marschall, like many of his predecessors, makes assumptions based on previous assertions without providing further documentation.

Specific events in Outcault's career and the appearance of the *Yellow Kid* suggest that the existence of such a case is plausible, but the preponderance of evidence does not support it. Prior to moving from the *New York World* to the *New York Journal* Outcault initiated copyright applications for designs of the Yellow Kid with the first of his three requests dated 7 September 1896.[8] Although he demonstrated concern regarding ownership of the character before the move, afterwards there were several cartoonists drawing Yellow Kids: Luks' version of the feature ran in the *New York World*, Outcault's *Yellow Kid* feature appeared in the *New York Journal*, other *Journal* staff cartoonists exploited the character for a variety of other uses in that newspaper, and an unknown number of artists were contributing artwork for the non-newspaper related enterprises. The *New York Journal*, for example, published Yellow Kid drawings credited to J. Campbell Cory,[9] Archie Gunn,[10] H.B. Eddy,[11] and C.G. Bush,[12] in addition to numerous uncredited Yellow Kid drawings for advertisements and illustrations. Similarly, the Yellow Kid was used as a spokesperson in marketing many products, with Outcault and non-Outcault Yellow Kids sanctioned "by permission of *N.Y. Journal*."

Outcault's claims (if they were made) would have been weakened by this permitted use of the character by other artists, since he and the *New York Journal* allowed other artists to use the character without reprisal or threat of legal action. If the *New York World* felt that Outcault's later work was an infringement of their property, then they would have been compelled to sue the multitude of companies employing the Yellow Kid to promote their products, a small complement of artists who executed the artwork, and the *New York Journal* for sanctioning this use.

Despite extensive use of the character, Outcault felt that his claims on the *Yellow Kid* rights were secure enough to be a definable property for trade or sale to others. On 4 February 1898, Outcault and

An uncredited drawing of the Yellow Kid from the *New York Journal* (24 October 1896, 11) used to promote the want ad section.

Connor assigned the copyright for *McFadden's Flats* and the *Yellow Kid* to the McLaughlin Brothers,[13] just two days prior to Outcault's last regular *Yellow Kid* feature in the *New York Journal* on 6 February 1898.[14] Outcault's lax observance of copyright assignment presents another significant discrepancy because he did not stop using the Yellow Kid character later in drawings published in both the *New York Journal* and the *New York World*. Two months after assigning his copyright of the *Yellow Kid*, Outcault included the character in his series *The Huckleberry Volunteers* in the *New York Journal*,[15] and in the following month the character made one-time appearances in Outcault's *The Casey Corner Kids' Dime Museum* and *The Bud and Blossom of the Yellow Kid* in the *New York World*.[16]

Detail from *Buster Brown* by Richard Felton Outcault as published in the *New York Herald* 27 August 1905 (page 1).

To the litigious contemporary American society, it seems unthinkable that either the *New York World* or the *New York Journal* would let the other newspaper freely use the character of the Yellow Kid without the threat of legal action, but an extensive search for *Yellow Kid* lawsuits has not uncovered any cases related to that character.[17] There may have been a controversy with both newspapers agitated by the appearance of the character in the other newspaper, but its continued use by both newspapers demonstrates that neither party was successful in establishing that the other was using Outcault's creation unlawfully. Likewise, there is no evidence that a case was pursued to an eventual decision in a higher court; but it is possible that proceedings were initiated and an out of court settlement was reached prior to a decision. A case could have been heard in a lower court where the rendered opinions were not published. In any event, a *Yellow Kid* case did not establish a precedent for other cartoon art-related court cases. That honor was accorded to the *Buster Brown* decision of 1906, cited in several subsequent cases involving cartoon art, copyright, trademark, and ownership issues.

In the day-to-day process of publishing Outcault's work, the *New York World* registered his cartoons for copyright as a part of the newspaper and subsequently held proprietary rights to those specific cartoons and those specific titles. Anything that Outcault drew for another newspaper from that point on could not duplicate the *New York World*'s published copyrighted drawings nor re-use their copyrighted titles. Any use of "Hogan's Alley" in the title or specific character names from the feature (if they appeared in the feature) could have been construed as copyright infringement. The likenesses of the characters were, however, not strictly protected by copyright and could be re-used by any cartoonist or illustrator for any purpose as long as they were not an exact copy of a previously copyrighted drawing. Similarly a photograph could be registered for copyright, although the subject of a specific photograph could not.

This resulted in occasions where two (or more) similar comic strips were published in different newspapers with different titles and subtle nuances, but nearly identical premises, situations, and characters. In such a case, the owner of each title (for example *Hogan's Alley* and *McFadden's Row of Flats*) had the legal right to license subsidiary rights to those titles and characters for the purposes of commercial exploitation. When Outcault moved to the *Journal*, although he changed the location from "Hogan's Alley" to "McFadden's Flats," he retained the use of the likenesses of the characters, including Mickey Dugan, the Yellow Kid.

R. F. Outcault created *Buster Brown* to follow the success of his *Yellow Kid, L'il Mose* and *Kelly's Kindergarten* features. The *Buster Brown* feature first appeared in the *New York Herald* on 4 May 1902. Outcault was persuaded to rejoin Hearst's *New York Journal*, ended the feature in the *Herald* on 31 December 1905 and restarted it two weeks later in the *Journal*. After Outcault left, the *New York Herald* published old *Buster Brown* installments, then continued *Buster Brown* with artists other than Outcault.[18] As a result Outcault sued the *New York Herald* to stop them from producing a

Detail from *Buster and Tige* by an unknown cartoonist as published in the *New York Herald* 7 January 1906 (page 4).

feature even similar to *Buster Brown*. The New York Herald Company, in turn, sued the Star Company (the parent publishing company of the *New York Journal*) for the trademark of the *Buster Brown* title and the right to continue the feature employing any artist of their choice.

In 1906 both cases were tried in the same court by the same judge, with the New York Herald Company's case being heard first. The *Buster Brown* case, *New York Herald Company v. Star Company*, was decided on the basis of trademark and trade-name issues (as opposed to copyright), as was *Outcalt* [sic] *v. New York Herald*. In the first case the court held that the New York Herald Company had the right to continue the use of the title *Buster Brown*, as it had become an exclusive trademark of the newspaper through its published use over a three and a half year period. The court noted that

> whether or not the original draughtsman of the so-called "Buster Brown" pictures was in the employ of the Herald is immaterial; concededly it bought them from him, paid for them, published them (whether with or without retouching, coloring, etc., is immaterial) and headed the page on which they were published with the words "Buster Brown."[19]

In favor of the *New York Herald*, the court issued a restraining order against the *New York Journal*'s use of the title *Buster Brown*, noting that this restriction included Outcault as well. The court concluded its remarks by noting that the Star Company could continue the feature as long as they did not use the title nor infringe on the previously published and copyrighted drawings:

> Mr. Outcalt [sic] or any one else whom the defendant may choose to employ, is entirely free to design, draw, color, and publish comic pictures of the same kind as those to which plaintiff has prefixed that title, provided only that they do not so closely imitate pictures already published and copyrighted as to be an infringement thereof.[20]

In the view of the court, the title (*Buster Brown*) and the individual published drawings were subject to copyright, but the characters in general (including elements of likeness, costume, and demeanor) were not tangible enough to merit copyright nor trademark. Outcault and the Star Company were free to use the character of Buster Brown, but not the name nor the title.

In *Outcalt* [sic] *v. New York Herald*, Outcault argued that he had the right to exclude the *New York Herald* from use of the characters and the title, despite the fact that he sold his artwork to the newspaper and they held the copyright to his comic strips published in the *New York Herald*. The court noted Outcault's contention that the *New York Herald's* use of *Buster Brown* was

> unfair competition in trade for any one else to draw and offer for sale any other pictures in which, although the scenes and incidents are different, some of the characters are imitations of those which appeared in the earlier pictures which complainant sold to defendant.[21]

Although Outcault had sold his pictures to the *New York Herald* and they "colored, copyrighted and published" his work, he held that he maintained the creative rights to his characters.

> [Outcault,] although he never copyrighted them and did not acquire any right to the title in connection with newspaper publication, has, nevertheless, some common-law title to individual figures therein displayed, which he can maintain to the exclusion of others, who depict them in other scenes and situations.[22]

The court was not sympathetic to Outcault's claim, noting that "it is sufficient to say that no authority is cited supporting this proposition, which seems entirely novel and does not commend itself as sound."[23] His motion was denied.

The existence of these cases further decreases the likelihood of the *Yellow Kid* case. Because Outcault was the creator of both the *Yellow Kid* and

Buster Brown, it seems inconceivable that any legal action initiated on behalf of the former would not have been applied in the latter case. There were no references to a prior case involving the *Yellow Kid* and Outcault did not claim rights awarded in an earlier case. Therefore it seems extremely unlikely that there was a *Yellow Kid* case.[24]

In the *Buster Brown* cases the court only recognized the composition and execution of a drawing, refusing to entertain the idea of character (including likeness and temperament) as a significant element of cartoon art. Outcault's suit is notable as one of the first efforts for what is now termed "creator's rights." Outcault's failed bid was an unfortunate precedent for other cartoonists who sought similar protection for their characters and artwork.

Two other cases directly involve *Buster Brown*, the 1907 *Outcault v. New York Herald Company* and the 1908-1909 *New York Herald Company v. Ottawa Citizen Company*. In the 1907 case, Outcault sued the New York Herald Company for $50,000 in damages on the grounds of libel. Immediately after Outcault left the newspaper to work at the *New York Journal*, the *New York Herald* republished an early *Buster Brown* comic strip. A few days after reprinting "The Buster and His Bath," the European edition of the newspaper published a letter critical of Outcault and the feature. The newspaper then reprinted the letter in the New York edition with editorial commentary.

> Hotel Lord Byron
> No. 16 Rue Lord Byron
> Paris, Jan. 10, 1906.
>
> To the Editor of the *Herald*:
>
> What is the matter with Buster and Tige, children? I will tell you. Mr. Outcault has evidently run out of ideas and no wonder! But, unlike Mr. Gibson, he is not willing to attempt something new. "The Buster and his Bath" that you saw in the *Herald* last Sunday was one of the first of the Buster Brown series and appeared in the *New York Herald* several years ago when Buster was still somewhat raw and crude. This accounts for the difference that puzzled you.
>
> "GRANNY."[25]

Instead of explaining that Outcault had left the *New York Herald* and that the newspaper was reprinting early installments of the comic strip, the newspaper announced that the feature was past its prime and used this as an opportunity to promote their other cartoon art features:

> Grumblers do not appear to realize that the sere and yellow leaf period must arrive for Buster as well as for all things. The power of the European edition has provided its readers with a new and exceedingly amusing pet, "Little Nemo," whose popularity here with young and old alike is boundless.
>
> Indeed, his adventures in Slumberland, the latest cataclysm provoked by Sammy Sneeze, and the agitated existence of those quaint little creatures, the Tiny Teds, form an amazingly popular feature of the weekly comic section of the European edition that more than compensates for the waning interest of Buster's pranks.[26]

Although the *New York Herald* had been uncharitable, the court found that Outcault failed to state a cause of action; the words that were considered actionable were sufficiently vague and did not constitute libel.

In the 1908-1909 case, the New York Herald Company, still holding the trademark for *Buster Brown*, sued the Ottawa Citizen Company for the illegal use of the terms "Buster Brown" or "Buster Brown and Tige" as the title to a comic section of a newspaper. The Canadian court acknowledged that the *Buster Brown* trademark was upheld in the United States with *New York Herald Company v. Star Company*. The court found that Canadian law did not protect the title or characters under trademark laws, since the feature was not used to promote a specific product but was an element of the product being sold. It was suggested that the New York Herald Company investigate copyrighting the character and seek protections on that basis.[27]

In contrast to the legal proceedings between Outcault and the *New York Herald*, the Outcault Advertising Company was successful in prosecuting cases involving companies' infringements on Outcault's copyrighted artwork. More than thirty lawsuits involved Outcault's firm and a conglomeration of other companies, including *Outcault Advertising Company v. American Furniture Company*,[28] *Outcault Advertising Company v. Harry Joseph Clothing Company*,[29] and *Outcault Advertising Company v. Young Hardware Company*.[30] Outcault also entered into legal battles over the theatrical rights to *Buster Brown* in the 1907 *Outcault v. Bonheur*[31] and the 1909 *Outcault v. Lamar*.[32] The use of the Buster Brown character was one of the most frequently contested issues in the early history of cartoon art.

The suit involving Rudolph Dirks had little to do with the ownership of *The Katzenjammer Kids*

but was concerned with the contract between Dirks and the Star Company. In the 1914 *Star Company v. Press Publishing Company*, the Star Company (as publisher of the *New York Journal*) sued the Press Publishing Company (as publisher of the *New York World*) and cartoonist Rudolph Dirks, creator of the *Katzenjammer Kids*. The dispute centered on the exclusivity clause in Dirks' contract with the Star Company. After Dirks had a disagreement with the *New York Journal*, he went to work for the *New York World* while theoretically still under contract with the Star Company. The Star Company sued to restrain Dirks from working for their competition, although they were no longer interested in publishing his work nor were they paying him in the interim. The court found Dirks' contract flawed in that the Star Company expected that it could keep the cartoonist off of their payroll as well as prevent his working for any other employer for the duration of the contract, thereby creating a master and servant relationship. The court found that the clause in question was "unenforceable by injunction" and that Dirks was free to work for whom he pleased.[33]

The most elaborate of the cases began in 1915, and concerned the ownership issues of Bud Fisher's *Mutt and Jeff*. Initially the Star Company (*New York Journal*) sued the Wheeler Syndicate to restrain them from using the title *Mutt and Jeff* in connection with the comic strip, maintaining their rights to the trademark of *Mutt and Jeff*, and citing the *Buster Brown* case as a basis for this claim. The court found that

> the right of the Star Company to a trademark in the words "Mutt and Jeff," as applied to a comic section or strip, is so doubtful and the danger of deceiving the public is so great, that no preliminary injunction should issue.[34]

In August 1916 the Star Company continued to argue that it held a valid right to the trademark of the *Mutt and Jeff* title, although the courts could find no merit in their claims. In December 1916, the United States Patent and Trademarks Office rejected a claim of the Star Company to cancel Fisher's registration of the words "Mutt and Jeff."[35] Four separate suits and counter-suits[36] were eventually argued through the court system until they reached the United States Supreme Court in 1921. Ultimately, Fisher's rights to the trademark and tradename of *Mutt and Jeff* were affirmed, despite the extensive arguments and protestations of the Star Company.[37]

Throughout the cases described above involving comic strips, one major challenge to obtaining an impartial hearing was the courts' perception of cartoonists and their work. The opinions rendered regarded the cartoonists as "draughtsmen"[38] or similarly skilled laborers with little creative input or control. Throughout the early lawsuits, cartoonists were perceived as newspaper staff illustrators, who engaged in non-specific and non-creative work. Above all, their work in newspapers was not highly regarded and many people were hard-pressed to describe the features as any form of "art." References to comic strips in legal opinions demonstrate this bias with great regularity. In one of the later *Buster Brown* cases, comic strips were described generally as

> the nonsense that is produced by the brain of the man writing for the diversion of the idle that in truth is sold.[39]

The Katzenjammer Kids fared little better in the definition offered by the courts:

> a series of horrible but apparently popular drawings representing the suppositious [sic] experiences in varying surroundings of certain nondescripts known as the Katzenjammer Kids.[40]

Mutt and Jeff was probably described in the most practical of terms, but the issues of the lawsuit were more serious than *Buster Brown* and the *Katzenjammer Kids*:

> a series of five or six pictures arranged in a strip so as to cover the width of a newspaper page, and depicting the progressive development of a situation in which the oversized "Mutt" and the undersized "Jeff" are usually the only participants and in which the latter is usually the subject of maltreatment by the former.[41]

Each of the parties in the above decisions sought certain rights of ownership, but in several instances the courts were hesitant to affirm perpetual rights to characters in comic strips. In *New York Herald Company v. Ottawa Citizen Company*, the majority opinion of the court noted that comic strips "may be that kind of brain product that the copyright might amongst other things be extended to or that copyright might cover," however the court was "quite sure it never was intended those sections should apply to such a thing."[42]

These lawsuits have been recalled and discussed by writers of comic strip history, but none appear to have been cited or quoted in those studies. The opinions rendered in these cases provide insight into the development of copyright

and trademark issues in cartoon art. They also offer a unique view of the early years of commercially successful comic strips from the perspective of their creators and the challenges these cartoonists faced.

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Fisher v. Star Company, 160 N.Y.S. 693 (App. Div. 1916), *aff'd* 188 App. Div. 964, 176 N.Y.S. 964 (1919), *aff'd* 231 N.Y. 414, 132 N.E. 133, 19 A.L.R. 937 (1921), *cert. denied* 257 U.S. 654, 42 S. Ct. 94, 66 L. Ed. 419 (1921).

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Outcalt [sic] *v. New York Herald*, 146 F. 205 (N.Y. App. Div. 1906).

Outcault v. Bonbeur, 120 App. Div. 168, 104 N.Y.S. 1099 (1907).

Outcault v. Lamar, 135 App. Div. 110, 119 N.Y.S. 930 (1909).

Outcault v. New York Herald Company, 117 App. Div. 534, 102 N.Y.S. 685 (1907).

Outcault Advertising Company v. American Furniture Company, 10 Ga. App. 211, 73 S.E. 20 (1911).

Outcault Advertising Company v. Harry Joseph Clothing Company, 51 Ind. App. 55, 98 N.E. 1005 (1912).

Outcault Advertising Company v. Young Hardware Company, 110 Ark. 123, 161 S.W. 142 (Sup. Ct. 1913).

Press Publishing Company v. Falk, 59 F. 324 (N.Y. App. Div. 1894).

Press Publishing Company v. Morning Journal Association, 33 App. Div. 242, 53 N.Y.S. 371 (1898).

Press Publishing Company v. Morning Journal Association, 41 App. Div. 493, 58 N.Y.S. 708 (1899).

Star Company v. Fisher, 257 U.S. 654, 42 S. Ct. 94, 66 L. Ed. 419 (1921).

Star Company v. Press Publishing Company, 162 App. Div. 486, 147 N.Y.S. 579 (1914).

Star Company v. Wheeler Syndicate, Inc., 91 Misc. Rep. 640, 155 N.Y.S. 782 (App. Div. 1915), 160 N.Y.S. 689 (App. Div. 1916), *aff'd* 188 App. Div. 964, 176 N.Y.S. 923 (1919), *aff'd* 231 N.Y. 606, 132 N.E. 907 (1921), *cert. denied* 257 U.S. 654, 42 S. Ct. 94, 66 L. Ed. 419 (1921).

Wheeler Syndicate, Inc. v. Star Company, 160 N.Y.S. 693 (App. Div. 1916), *aff'd* 188 App. Div. 964, 176 N.Y.S. 925 (1919), 132 N.E. 907 (1921).

NOTES

1. References to these cases proliferate in cartoon art histories written to from the 1940s to the present day, although none of the literature cites a specific case or information from periodicals contemporary to the controversy. Writers who claim this to be so include Roy L. McCardell, "Opper, Outcault and Company: The Comic Supplement and the Men who Make It," *Everybody's Magazine* 12:6 (June 1905), 764; William Murrell, *A History of American Graphic Humor, 1865-1938* (New York: Macmillan, 1938), 138; Edward Pinkowski, *Forgotten Fathers* (Philadelphia: Sunshine Press, 1953), 161-162; Bill Blackbeard, "The Yellow Kid," *The World Encyclopedia of Comics*, ed. Maurice Horn (New York: Chelsea House, 1976), 712; Richard Marschall, *America's Great Comic-Strip Artists* (New York: Abbeville, 1989), 25; and Judith O'Sullivan, *The Great American Comic Strip: One Hundred Years of Cartoon Art* (Boston: Bulfinch Press, 1990), plate facing 148.

2. McCardell, "Opper, Outcault and Company," 764.

3. Cartoons were granted copyright protection for specific drawings (including the elements of style, form and composition), but did not equally protect the more abstract concept of character. A character could be depicted by any artist without fear of reprisal or legal action, as long as the use of the character fell within the definition of "fair use." For further discussion of these issues, see Bruce P. Keller and David H. Bernstein, "As Satiric As They Wanna Be: Parody Lawsuits Under Trademark and Copyright Laws," *ALI-ABA Course of Study: Trademarks, Unfair Competition, and Copyrights, November 4-5, 1994, Washington, D.C.* (Philadelphia: American Law Institute, 1994), 151-178.

4. Pinkowski, *Forgotten Fathers*, 161-162.

5. Blackbeard, "The Yellow Kid," 712.

6. Coulton Waugh, *The Comics* (1947. Rpt. Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 1991); Stephen Becker, *Comic Art in America* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1959).

7. Marschall, *America's Great Comic-Strip Artists*, 25.

8. Richard Felton Outcault, "The Yellow Dugan Kid," design, 1896 copyright registration (50565), Copyright Division, Library of Congress, rpt. O'Sullivan, *The Great American Comic Strip*, plate facing 148. Registered later that year were "Yellow Kid," design, 1896 copyright registration (66463) and "Design of the Yellow Kid," design, 1896 copyright registration (68735).

9. J. Campbell Cory, "Four Days More and the Political Campaign of '96 Will be Over," cartoon, *New York Journal* 30 October 1896, 5; Cory, "De're off in a bunch," cartoon, *New York Journal* 2 November 1896, 3.

10. Archie Gunn, "George Boniface as a Chinese Yellow Kid," Yellow Kid caricature, *New York Journal* 5 November 1896, 6.

11. H.B. Eddy, "A Feast of Reason and a Flow of Sparkling Humor," advertisement illustration, *New York Journal* 30 October 1896, 2; Eddy, "Out on Sunday," advertisement illustration, *New York Journal* 6 November 1896, 5.

12. C[harles] G[reening] Bush, "Is He an Orphan?—Nit!" Yellow Kid caricature, *New York Journal* 6 November 1896, 2.

13. Outcault and Connor, NY, copyright assignment of *McFadden's Flats* and *Yellow Kid* to McLaughlin Brothers (4 February 1898), copyright assignments (Vol. 19, p. 131), Copyright Division, Library of Congress. The nature of Connor's relationship to Outcault is unclear, but he appears to have been a business associate of some stature. Unfortunately, Connor's first name was not recorded in any of the documents discovered to date, but his last name appears in at least two copyright notices attached to Outcault's work. (See R.F. Outcault, *Johnny Jones' School Days*, cartoon, *Cleveland Plain Dealer* 20 February 1898, 27; Outcault, *Johnny Jones' School Days*, cartoon, *Philadelphia Inquirer* 20 February 1898, 40.) *Johnny Jones' School Days* was a precursor to Outcault's *Kelly's Kindergarten* (later *Kelly's Kids*) that appeared in Pulitzer's *New York World* (and syndicated in Pulitzer's *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*) from 16 October 1898 ("Opening of Kelly's Kindergarten for the Kids

in Kelly's Roost—The New Teacher Makes Her Bow," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, comic supplement, 4) through 6 August 1899 ("A Mad Dog Disturbs the Summer Repose of Kelly's Alley," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, comic supplement, 4). Outcault's freelance work in this period (for the *New York World*, the *New York Journal*, and miscellaneous newspapers) has been described by Richard Olson as Outcault's "lost period" (letter to the author, 8 November 1994). The examples that appear in the *New York World* show Outcault working with several established techniques of cartoon art: the panoramic single panel, focussed single panel and multiple frames. A variety of subjects (including social classes, ethnic groups, generational groups, and animals), with several locations (including street scenes, exteriors, interiors, and country/pastoral scenes) are shown. The story or "joke" of the piece is related in numerous ways, such as the two-line joke at the bottom of the drawing, the "foolish questions" later used by Rube Goldberg and Al Jaffee, pandemonium panels, physical comedy, reversal of expectation, and juxtaposition. This part of Outcault's work also includes a significant precursor to *Buster Brown*, "Bobby Jones's Painful Impressions of his Day on Grandfather's Farm" (cartoon, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* 20 August 1899, comic supplement, 4), which is one of the earliest examples of an Outcault child getting into seven kinds of trouble, then atoning for his sins with a posted resolution at the end of the feature.

14. R.F. Outcault, "Yellow Kids of All Nations," cartoon, *New York Journal* 6 February 1898, comic supplement.

15. *The Huckleberry Volunteers* began in the *New York Journal* as a commentary on the sinking of the *Maine* and the impending crisis with Spain. The feature ran in the daily newspaper from 8 April to 22 April 1898. The Yellow Kid made his first appearance in this series in "An Old Acquaintance Meets Them in Cuba and Assumes Charge" on 16 April and made a total of six appearances in this series of eleven cartoons.

16. R.F. Outcault, "The Casey Corner Kids' Dime Museum," cartoon, *New York World* 1 May 1898, comic supplement, 4; Outcault, "The Bud and Blossom of the Yellow Kid," cartoon, *New York World* 1 May 1898, comic supplement, 7.

17. This writer searched indices for plaintiffs or defendants in cases possibly involving Outcault, Hearst, Pulitzer, McLaughlin and Connor (as personal and corporate names); *New York Journal* (including *N.Y. Journal* and *Journal*), *New York World* (including *N.Y. World* and *World*); *Press Publishing Company* (parent publishing company of the *New York World*); and *Evening Journal Association, Morning Journal Association* and *Star Company* (parent publishing companies of the *New York Journal*). Indices searched include the Lexis and Westlaw databases and the American Digest System's *1906 Decennial Edition of the American Digest: A Complete Table of American Cases from 1658 to 1906* (St. Paul: West Publishing Company, 1911). While the publishing companies were named in a small number of cases as both plaintiffs and defendants and suits existed between the two, a *Yellow Kid* case is not among them. See *Press Publishing Company v. Falk*, 59 F. 324 (N.Y. App. Div. 1894); *Press Publishing Company v. Morning Journal Association*, 33 App. Div. 242, 53 N.Y.S. 371 (1898); and *Press Publishing Company v. Morning Journal Association*, 41 App. Div. 493, 58 N.Y.S. 708 (1899).

18. Although some comic strip histories and published legal opinions refer to other cartoonists drawing *Buster Brown*, none are credited with assuming responsibily for the comic strip. Richard Olson notes that the later non-Outcault *Buster Brown* installments in the *New York Herald* were unsigned and "clearly inferior" (telephone interview, 20 December 1994).

19. *New York Herald Company v. Star Company*, 146 F. 204 (N.Y. App. Div. 1906).

20. *New York Herald Company v. Star Company.*

21. *Outcalt* [sic] *v. New York Herald*, 146 F. 205 (N.Y. App. Div. 1906).

22. *Outcalt* [sic] *v. New York Herald.*

23. *Outcalt* [sic] *v. New York Herald.*

24. It is, of course, possible that a *Yellow Kid* case was heard in court, but did not have an impact on later lawsuits specifically involving Outcault. Recent reports have circulated about court documents relating to the *Yellow Kid*, but specific information about their contents has not been published. Anyone with information regarding a *Yellow Kid* case should contact the author care of this journal.

25. *Outcault v. New York Herald Company*, 117 App. Div. 534, 102 N.Y.S. 685 (1907).

26. *Outcault v. New York Herald Company.*

27. *New York Herald Company v. Ottawa Citizen Company*, 41 Can. S. Ct. 229 (1909).

28. 10 Ga. App. 211, 73 S.E. 20 (1911).

29. 51 Ind. App. 55, 98 N.E. 1005 (1912).

30. 110 Ark. 123, 161 S.W. 142 (Sup. Ct. 1913).

31. *Outcault v. Bonbeur*, 120 App. Div. 168, 104 N.Y.S. 1099 (1907).

32. *Outcault v. Lamar*, 135 App. Div. 110, 119 N.Y.S. 930 (1909).

33. *Star Company v. Press Publishing Company*, 162 App. Div. 486, 147 N.Y.S. 579 (1914).

34. *Star Company v. Wheeler Syndicate, Inc.*, 91 Misc. Rep. 640, 155 N.Y.S. 782 (App. Div. 1915).

35. "Decisions of the Commissioner of Patents and of United States Courts in Patent Cases, Decision of the Examiner of Interferences. *Star Company v. Fisher* (Decided December 22, 1916)," *Official Gazette of the United States Patent Office*, 236.1 (6 March 1917), 283-285.

36. *Star Company v. Wheeler Syndicate, Inc.*, 91 Misc. Rep. 640, 155 N.Y.S. 782 (App. Div. 1915), 160 N.Y.S. 689 (App. Div. 1916), *aff'd* 188 App. Div. 964, 176 N.Y.S. 923 (1919), *aff'd* 231 N.Y. 606, 132 N.E. 907 (1921), *cert. denied* 257 U.S. 654, 42 S. Ct. 94, 66 L. Ed. 419 (1921); *Fisher v. Star Company*, 160 N.Y.S. 693 (App. Div. 1916), *aff'd* 188 App. Div. 964, 176 N.Y.S. 964 (1919), *aff'd* 231 N.Y. 414, 132 N.E. 133, 19 A.L.R. 937 (1921), *cert. denied* 257 U.S. 654, 42 S. Ct. 94, 66 L. Ed. 419 (1921); and *Wheeler Syndicate, Inc. v. Star Company*, 160 N.Y.S. 693 (App. Div. 1916), *aff'd* 188 App. Div. 964, 176 N.Y.S. 925 (1919), 132 N.E. 907 (N.Y. 1921).

37. For further information about the circumstances and relationship between Fisher and the Star Company, see Robert C. Harvey, "Bud Fisher and the Daily Comic Strip," *Inks: Cartoon and Comic Art Studies* 1 (February 1994), 14-25.

38. *New York Herald Company v. Star Company.*

39. *New York Herald Company v. Ottawa Citizen Company.*

40. *Star Company v. Press Publishing Company.*

41. *Star Company v. Wheeler Syndicate, Inc.*, 91 Misc. Rep. 640, 155 N.Y.S. 782 (App. Div. 1915).

42. *New York Herald Company v. Ottawa Citizen Company.*

Wee George and the

Caricature and Metaphor in

"Those other boys play so rough! Can't you just *appoint* me president?"
Dennis Renault, *Sacramento Bee*, 17 February 1988. Reproduced by permission of the cartoonist.

Seven Dwarfs
Campaign '88 Cartoons[1]

BY JANIS L. EDWARDS

A metaphor, like a great caricature, hits us like a blinding flash and forever organizes the world.

Sol Worth[2]

Objectivity is a hallmark of journalism practice. Not everything in a newspaper is objective, of course. There is a place for editorial commentary, stating an opinion, taking sides, choosing a stance. With the subjective nature of editorials, fairness becomes the standard. Political cartoons, long a standard feature of the journalistic enterprise, serve a function of editorial commentary. Political cartoons, however, are not fair. They are not really supposed to be.

If political cartoons were not satire, they would never stand up to critical evaluation, because cartoonists use the fallacies of argument—hyperbole, stereotyping, *ad hominem*—to make their points. Political cartoonists do not compliment their subjects, they degrade them. Cartoonists take potshots at their targets, exaggerate their characteristics, and invent new ones. And yet, within this fantasy framework of overstatement and invention, cartoons often tell the truth about a situation better than "objective" reporting can. More precisely, the cartoonist draws a version of the world as he or she sees it, which develops the power of a Truth defined. As McDonald has noted, cartoonists "distort the facts in service of a truth that is larger than the facts."[3] Cartoonists arrive at their subjective truths by polemically disrespecting the subjects of their evaluation, a process that some have linked to the tenets of democracy.[4] Because the targets of cartoonists are most frequently our national leaders—people whose positions normally invite respect—the cartoonist's debunking role is intensified by irony. Cartooning has resonance as social commentary, but it is also, according to veteran artist Bill Mauldin, "essentially a destructive art."[5]

The debunking function of today's political cartoon is rooted in its historical antecedent, the caricature.[6] Graphic artists depicted important people in distorted, exaggerated, and unflattering likenesses, as with Thomas Nast's infamous cartoons about Boss Tweed, casting them into fictional situations designed to illuminate the truth as the artist saw it. Sometimes caricaturists went further with their depictions, transforming human subjects into new, concrete forms in order to create associations via metaphor. In this vein, Nast portrayed Boss Tweed as a vulture and E.W. Kemble turned Teddy Roosevelt into a moose. Such cartoons create caricatures within visual metaphors, and generate a powerful transformation from likeness to equivalence. Metaphor bridges a gap between what is (Reality) and is not (Invention), creating a new sense of what is (Subjective Truth). Tweed was a man, not a carnivorous bird, but by inventing the likeness, Nast proposes the equivalence, and creates the subjective reality of a politician who, along with his cohorts, preys upon weaker victims. In fact, E. H. Gombrich maintains that it is the level of equivalence perceived by the viewer that dictates whether the "likeness" is acceptable as a likeness.[7] Although political cartoonists call upon a variety of strategies in their work, the metaphor-driven caricature remains a common feature of contemporary political cartoons, and one of its most potent devices for making a point.

When caricature combines with metaphor people are presented as they are and as they are not, simultaneously. The late anthropologist Sol Worth maintained that caricature was unique in its ability to create visual metaphor, because of the difficulty in presenting an image where two things can be simultaneously perceived.[8] A metaphor must distort its subject adequately in order to communicate its transformation into something else, yet the two aspects of the equation must be recognizable. Think of the optical illusions of M. C. Escher; we cannot see two perspectives simultaneously, we can only go back and forth. A cartoon, says Worth, allows us to go back and forth between the original subject and its transformed nature. A caricature is able to bring two ideas together simultaneously, not just in juxtaposition, but incorporating the qualities of resemblance and deformity needed to see the transforming effect between likeness and equivalence.

The visual metaphor has two aspects, iconicity and fit. A caricature, in order to operate successfully as a metaphor, first has to look like its original subject. For example, if George Bush is depicted in a cartoon as a cheerleader for Reagan's policies, we must be able to recognize that the subject is George Bush. This is possible because the artist has drawn a recognizable likeness of the vice president's facial features. But the artist has also used the visual referents of a cheerleader—the pom-poms, a megaphone, a letter sweater, and a pleated skirt—to indicate what George Bush is literally *not*, but figuratively *becomes*. In effecting the metaphorical transformation between likeness and equivalence, the cartoonist creates his meaning, his Truth, by relying upon our social knowledge of what a football cheerleader is: someone who is not a player, but who remains on the sidelines offering loyalty and moral support, and who attempts to marshall audience support for the home team. Our recognition of the concrete subjects the cartoonist is portraying—Bush's face, with his crooked smile and distinctive glasses, "deformed" by his wearing of a cheerleader costume—is the iconicity, or resemblance, in the cartoon, and our grasp of the social symbolism of a cheerleader's role and its connection to Bush is a matter of fit, or equivalency. In this case, Scott Willis of the *San Jose Mercury News* deformed Bush negatively by dressing him as a cheerleader, and a girl at that, in service to a larger message that has the ring of insight to the reality of the situation.[9] So, metaphor, although not the exclusive figurative strategy to be found in political cartoons, is a significant strategic tool, especially when used with caricature.

The idea of metaphor in political cartoons is not one of embellishment, but refers to a more fundamental process, described by Lakoff and Johnson in their book *Metaphors We Live By*.[10] We not only may invent metaphors to describe unfamil-

Scott Willis, *San Jose Mercury News*. Reprinted in *New York Times*, 22 February 1987, 2. Reproduced by permission of the cartoonist.

iar ideas or situations, we organize and understand our world through systematic metaphorical concepts, such as GOOD IS UP/BAD IS DOWN and HIGH STATUS IS UP/LOW STATUS IS DOWN, and BIGGER IS BETTER, which come to operate as an everyday logic. Gombrich refers to such controlling concepts as universal or natural metaphors, so fundamentally defining that we are not even aware of them *as* metaphors.[11] In this view, metaphor also plays a central role in the way we frame and communicate cultural values. We are guided in our choices of expression by systematic ideas of categorization. The metaphors we use to express ideas are coherent with our cultural values in society. So, metaphors that express the idea that BIGGER IS BETTER make sense in a way that SMALLER IS BETTER metaphors do not.

Metaphors in political cartoons may appear as unique and singular images, or several cartoonists may tap into a single metaphor or pattern of metaphors. What cartoonists may regard as clichés can be seen as dominant themes that serve a meaningful purpose. A particular metaphor might express an idea more vividly than some other metaphor. When certain metaphors prove useful to different cartoonists over time, they have a tendency to reinforce their meanings to the public. There is some tacit agreement that a political situation is best described in a certain set of ways; the essential "Truth" of a political cartoon is reproduced each time the strategies of that truth-telling are repeated.

The way in which metaphor and caricature function within the satiric framework of political cartoons is aptly illustrated in cartoons from the 1988 presidential campaign. This group of cartoons contained certain specific metaphoric clusters that sharply and consistently defined candidates, or groups of candidates.[12] Metaphors of diminishment were particularly evident, reinforcing the ridiculing function of satire and providing coherence with the controlling metaphors of our culture such as BAD IS DOWN/LOW STATUS IS DOWN that define diminishment as negativizing. Satire's function is to ridicule; insofar as caricatures are satiric instruments, and the historic function of political caricature is to debunk and diminish its subjects, caricature may be seen as inherently negative. Cartoonists who commented on the 1988 presidential campaign accentuated the negative by literally cutting the candidates down to size.

Very early in 1987, as various candidates or potential candidates surfaced, there was a trend among cartoonists to depict the Democratic pool as a bland, amorphous collection of unknowns whose identities were confusing. In cartoons by Oliphant and Schorr, respectively, even the Democratic Party and Richard Gephardt's mother were confused about his identity.[13] Whether cartoonists made demeaning references to individual Democratic candidates or the pool, the total effect was a definition of a group of candidates found wanting. "They're *all* runts," declared mother pig Iowa about her piglets (the candidates) in a cartoon by Duffy of the *Des Moines Register*.[14] The Democratic party searched in vain for someone who would stand out from the crowd and be noticed, someone who could appeal to a broad electorate without becoming a plain vanilla, as in "Vanilla Babbitt, Vanilla Biden, Vanilla Dukakis," and so on at the "Democraatz Gourmet Ice Cream Shop" drawn by MacNelly.[15] As Meyer saw it, what the Democrats seemed to have instead of a national leader was a Thanksgiving refrigerator containing "six kinds of fruitcake and a leftover turkey."[16] If you could stuff seven candidates into a refrigerator, how big in stature could they be? Not big enough to play the game, suggested Morin, since it took three of the tiny, almost faceless, men—"Whosiers?"— to hold up one basketball.[17]

If the Democrats were depicted as nobodies in some early cartoons, they soon became unflattering somebodies in the most memorable, strident, and visually potent metaphor of diminishment that appeared in a sustained way during the pre-primary period. Between the fall of 1987 and continuing through the early months of 1988, the Democratic hopefuls were known as the Seven Dwarfs. Although this metaphor did not originate with a cartoonist, its vivid qualities were easily transferred to the visual, and it was used repeatedly in cartoon commentary. More significantly, the metaphor endured even as the pool of candidates changed and fluctuated.

Usually, all seven initial candidates—Biden, Hart, Jackson, Dukakis, Gephardt, Simon, and Babbitt—were depicted, dressed in their Disney incarnations. Some cartoonists, notably Duffy[18] and Gamble[19], drew a likeness of each individual candidate in dwarf's clothing although as the metaphor played out over time, complete costuming and portraiture became superfluous.[20] Other cartoonists adopting the metaphor added verbal twists, renaming the candidates "Shifty" (Biden), "Nifty" (Gore), "Thrifty" (Dukakis), "Jivey" (Jackson), "Squeaky" (Gephardt), and "Cranky" (Babbitt);[21] or, more sarcastically, 'Horny" (Hart) and "Sneaky" (Biden).[22] As candidates withdrew from the race and the pool shrank to six, then five, the metaphor endured. When Pat Schroeder considered

URP
FIRST HORNY DISAPPEARS. NOW SNEAKY. SOMETHING WEIRD'S GOING ON!
DEM
MEYER SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE ©1987 SPECIAL FEATURES

Tom Meyer, *San Francisco Chronicle*, reprinted in *Washington Post Weekly Edition*, 19 October 1987. Reproduced by permission of the cartoonist.

entering the race, upsetting the gender equation, she was accommodated into the metaphor as Snow White to the male dwarfs/candidates.[23]

The Seven Dwarfs metaphor served to diminish the candidates on two levels: Most obviously, to cast the candidates as dwarfs reduced them in stature physically. But in the cartoons size was relative. The dwarfs were small mainly in relation to the "giant" Mario Cuomo, either because cartoonists drew him that way, as Jim Borgman did, or because he was notably absent from the dwarf characterization.[24] As Borgman's dwarfs noted, Cuomo "would stretch the metaphor all out of whack" if he joined the candidate pool.[25]

The candidates were not merely small men, however, but were modeled after specific characters best known from the animated Disney film. This provided another level of diminishment, for the dwarfs of the Disney version were not fully human men so much as fantasy elves. The metaphor recalled flat, one-dimensional entities whose whole persona could be summed up by one banal personality feature—Sleepy, Dopey, Bashful, Happy, and so on. (Or, Shifty, Nifty, and Squeaky.) Thus the Democratic candidates (except for Cuomo) were reduced in size *and* quality until they became a cartoon version of leadership.

Distracted by speculation fomented by a large Democratic candidate pool, and by Hart's and Biden's early difficulties with ethical issues, cartoonists paid less attention to the Republican candidates in the early, pre-primary period. When references to the Republicans did appear, metaphors of diminishment were uncommon, although the qualities of GOP hopefuls were called into question in other ways. Tom Toles, for example, regularly drew Pat Robertson wearing a crude costume halo affixed by an armature, suggesting the reverend's spiritual links were insincere or unauthentic. Later, Toles presented the halo as a bent coat hanger, a makeshift version of both a halo and a television antenna.

In the waning days of the Reagan Presidency, George Bush was concerned with another kind of halo—the negative halo effect of questions about

the administration's role in Iran-Contra. Initially, Bush distanced himself from the President. But, as Reagan's popularity seemed to survive the Iran-Contra heat, Bush reclaimed his position as Reagan's natural heir-apparent, inviting a diminishment by cartoonists that evolved in numerous ways.

The strategies of diminishment employed by cartoonists that were directed at Bush fell into six metaphor types, bound together by the persona of a "Wee George," an image the Democrats must have hoped would take root in the collective mind of the electorate.[26] While the motives of cartoonists may not have been as partisan as that of Democratic leaders, their presentation of a diminished George Bush was consistent with the debunking task of satire. In general, cartoonists diminished Bush by metaphorically depicting and defining him as the miniature man, the child, a pet or pseudo-animal, an ineffectual incompetent, someone of servile status, or a nonentity.

THE MINIATURE MAN

In some cartoons, George Bush was depicted as a fully developed man, but in miniature, especially in comparison with Ronald Reagan (whom Bush would emulate) in much the same way that the Democratic "dwarfs" were compared with Mario Cuomo. Bush stood in Reagan's boots, for example but they overwhelmed him by coming up to his waist.[27] Bush was so small he could fit in Ronald Reagan's pockets and run in and out of Reagan's vast shadow.[28]

THE CHILD

In other cartoons, Bush was reduced in size and maturity by taking the form of a child or child-like person. At least four cartoonists—Jules Feiffer, Paul Szep, Dennis Renault, and Sinn Graff— added to the demeaning aspect of the metaphor by putting "Georgie Bushie" in short pants. To them, Bush was a kid who depended on the "adult" Reagan to pave his way. "Can't you just *appoint* me President?" he tearfully implores in a Renault cartoon.[29] To Schorr and Margulies, Bush was a man who engaged in child-like behavior, swinging on a swing or wearing a beanie with a propeller. In Borgman's mind, George Bush was the kind of child whose heroes were non-leaders like Tonto and Millard Fillmore and who was eager to chase the foul balls while others played the game.[30]

THE PET/ANIMAL

As if being a child were not demeaning enough, Bush was further reduced by defining him in non-human terms, as an animal. But George Bush was an animal lacking in ferocity or even authenticity. He might be a toy, a pet, an imposter or some other ludicrous example of leadership and strength. In one of the more demeaning (and entertaining) cartoons of the campaign, Mike Keefe drew Bush as a small, hyperactive dog panting, "I'm a good dog! I'm a good dog! May I be master now?!"[31] "You're going to see a tiger unleashed!" Bush had declared, but what we saw in the cartoons was a pussycat or Bush in a not-very-convincing tiger costume.[32]

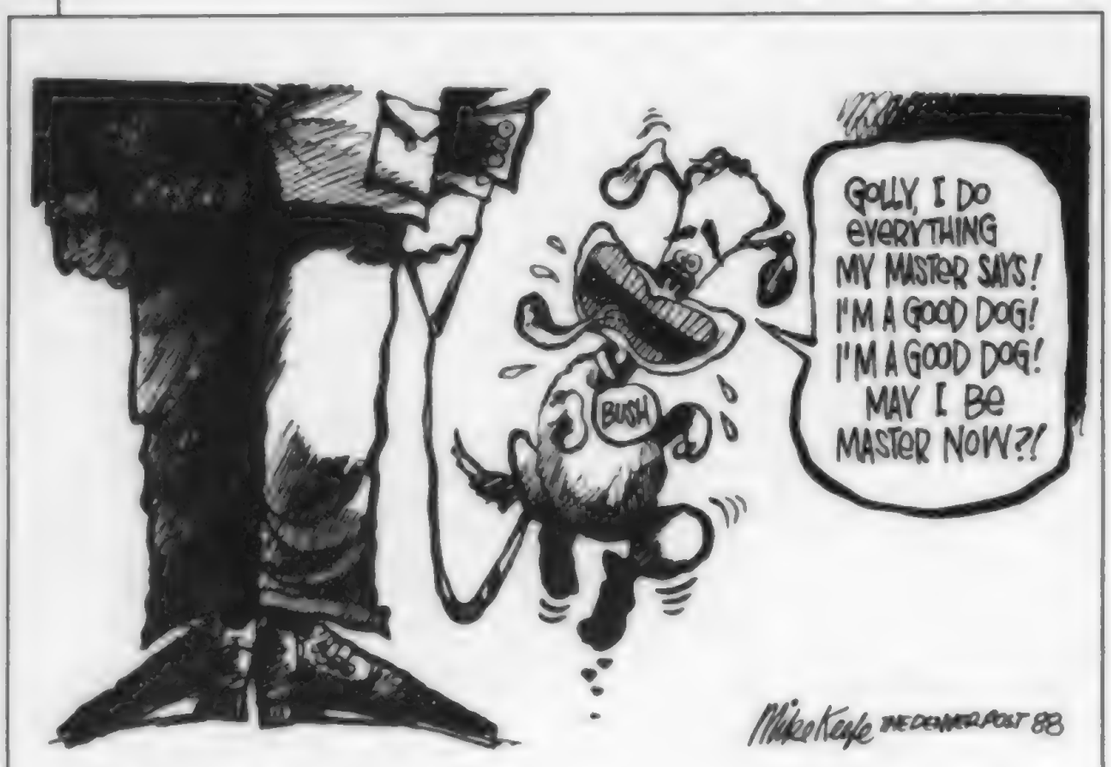
The metaphors of the Miniature Man, the Child, and the Pet/Tame Animal operated by changing George Bush's form into a new metaphor, intended to redefine Bush as something less than a full man or a leader. Other metaphors used by cartoonists highlighted Bush's position by casting him in particular roles in which he either acted incompetently or was reduced to a servile position—neither of which framed an ideal leader.

THE INEFFECTUAL INCOMPETENT

This group of metaphors evoked a misplaced manliness and a lack of ability. For example, Bob Gorrell depicted Bush as a baseball outfielder about to miss an otherwise easy catch (the presidency), even as he anxiously hopes not to "blow it."[33] Not only is Bush incapable of making this catch, his appearance is almost sissified as he bends his knees, closes his eyes, grimaces, and looks away from the ball. The cartoons which played on metaphors of incompetence were more complex in their invention than some others. Rather than a straightforward depiction of Bush as he is and is not—a visual pun—the metaphors of the "incompetent" cartoons were realized by picturing Bush acting out situations or saying something about his own abilities, at the same time caricaturing or "deforming" his appearance to fit the scene. The situations, especially those using a sports setting, demeaned Bush by calling into question his fitness for other stereotypical masculine activities as analogy for his fitness for the historically masculinized presidential office. This, in spite of the evidence that George Bush was a peripatetic sportsman.

SERVILE STATUS OR ROLE

George Bush's masculinity, presumably a qualification for his office, was also questioned in a group of metaphors which cast him into certain reduced roles. Most commonly, this type of metaphor was expressed by depicting Bush in women's clothing playing the part of the cheerleader,[34] a Dating Game contestant[35], or a housewife.[36] The most



Mike Keefe, *Denver Post*. Reprinted in *Political Pix*, 7 March 1988. Reproduced by permission of the cartoonist.

enduring visualization of the Bush-in-drag construction was Oliphant's rendering of Bush with a purse. This feminine motif persisted in Oliphant's cartoons throughout Bush's administration, except for the duration of the Gulf War.[37] Although the implication of a reduction in status created through gender-switching may be odious to the feminist sensibility, it does recall the burlesque tradition in which men are made ridiculous by taking on the appearance of women; the humor is based on the historically reduced status of women relative to that of men.

In general, the servile status metaphors seem to refer to the perception of the vice presidential role as subservient to that of the president, a perception that preceded the 1988 campaign. In a cartoon by Gamble, "Tonto" Bush struggles to handle the baggage as he assumes a secondary position to the Lone Ranger (Ronald Reagan).[38] The secondary role of the vice president has stronger resonance than the reality that many vice presidents (including Bush) successfully used their position as a stepping-stone to the presidency.

The burlesque feminizing of Bush relates to a commonplace reference to Bush's "wimp factor," although the epithet served primarily as a verbal device, as when Doug Marlette posed George Bush as Rhett Butler for the Super Tuesday performance of "Gone with the Wimp" and when Danziger pictured Bush as Alfred E. Neuman saying, "What me Wimpy?"[39]

THE NONENTITY

In an interesting twist on visual depiction, some cartoonists diminished Bush by picturing his absence. The debunking feature of this metaphor of nonentity was most evident in Garry Trudeau's *Doonesbury* commentaries where the "nothingness" of Bush was indicated by a mere blip on the cartoon panel. If Bush was not actually invisible in other cartoons, he might be depicted as a nonentity of sorts, as when Keefe describes him as a "Mystery Boy," "an unintelligible lad found after wandering aimlessly for seven years."[40] The Keefe cartoon combined Bush's nonentity status with the child metaphor.

Another cartoon in this group effectively turns a metaphor of disappearance into a metaphor of miniaturization, bringing us full circle through the Bush typologies. Here Herblock depicts Bush shrinking before our eyes, bringing him down to Dan Quayle's greatly reduced level, upending Bush's speculation that Quayle would "make him look bigger."[41] That Herblock's Bush shrinks beside Quayle is noteworthy for its unique interpretation of the relationship between the two candidates. With the choice of Quayle as his running mate, cartoonists by and large agreed that Bush looked bigger by comparison. Even if Bush were reduced to childishness, Quayle was still smaller and more infantile. Graff, for example, portrayed Bush as a school boy escorting a much younger Dan Quayle (complete with pacifier) to school, as "Daddy" Ronald Reagan departs.[42] Quayle now became the easy target for diminishment, and was routinely depicted as a child, a small quail, and "Bush Lite" by cartoonists. Compared to the cartoonists' version of Quayle, Bush was elevated until he "looked presidential." Kevin Kallaugher [KAL] reported that following Quayle's selection as running-mate, he "consciously switched his own drawings to portray a manlier image of Bush."[43]

Cartoonists, in "lifting the veil," may have been suggesting that Bush's selection of Quayle was a strategy intended to elevate Bush. Joan Quigley, an astrologer whose services were allegedly employed by the Reagan White House, claimed that Quayle's "inexperience and lack of stature" made Bush appear mature and substantial by design.[44] More credibly, journalist Phil Duncan noted that among Quayle's assets to the Republican ticket was his ability, in his own weakness, to cast Bush in the role of a leader, the one in charge, a potentially tricky negotiation for a sitting or former vice president in Ronald Reagan's shadow.[45]

Some of the cartoons about campaign '88, such as the Democratic Seven Dwarfs, extended metaphors that existed in written discourse, but the metaphors were emphasized by their repetition in

new forms. The pictorial aspect of political cartoons gives the metaphors a sense of immediacy. The transformative aspect of metaphors evokes a sense of being that we take as a "reality effect." The rhetoric of political cartoons exhibits, rather than represents. Even though we know these metaphorical presentations are fictions, they are made vivid by their concrete portrayals and the use of familiar, recognizable images as their organizing principle.

What was the significance of these metaphors in the political scheme? In the case of the Seven Dwarfs, the metaphor worked not because of our response to the film or the fable itself, but because of its appropriate framing of an idea about the Democratic pool through a concretely familiar presentation. Although cartoonists did not invent the allusion, they probably had fun drawing it, and it vividly communicated the incongruity between what we expect of our leaders and what we know cartoon dwarfs to be.[46] Surely, no candidate could be pleased by his depiction as a dwarf among giants, or as a crybaby child, even if he or she understands the function of satire.

Cartoonists do not presume to control voters, and there is no body of research to definitively suggest cartoonists are effective at opinion change.[47] But we need not estimate the power of cartoons only by their demonstrable effects on their audiences. Cartoonists use strategic means to carry out assertions and they provoke public response. Cartoons are also significant in that they mirror and delineate the themes of political discourse and promote the symbols of the existing national consensus. In doing so, they invite readers to share the cartoonist's perspective. DeSousa and Medhurst claim this ability to strike a responsive public chord as the source of the cartoon's power, not whether or not the cartoon directly changes anyone's opinion.[48] It would be simplistic, then, to assume that Bush won the election because he appeared "elevated" next to his vice presidential choice. But the cartoons do indicate an interesting dynamic where voters chose Bush-the-Reagan-clone in spite of his reduced status compared to the popular, Teflon-coated incumbent. This points to a perception that even a diminished Reagan (as Bush was presented) was better than no Reagan at all. By the time of the election, Morin presented Bush as a candidate all but anointed king by media acclamation. With a "reduced" Reagan in office in the form of George Bush, the press and the electorate might have been inclined to reduce their expectations, at least for a time.[49] By examining this group of cartoons which displayed certain clusters of metaphors, we find an implication that the metaphors depicted and repeated are more enduring than specific events suggest. For example, when Willis and Auth drew George Bush as a cheerleader, it was in specific reference to his perceived role in the Iran-Contra dealings. But the image of a cheerleader and the subservience of the role makes sense beyond that immediate situation, defining Bush in a generalized demeaning way, which was not contested until Quayle came along to be further reduced. Similarly, how is a candidate defined as a "dwarf" able to elevate himself to presidential status?

DeSousa and Medhurst argued that such metaphorical caricatures function as a statement of social consensus, but when published they also reenter the collective arena of political consciousness, especially when they are pervasive and repeated images, as these diminishing metaphors of Campaign '88 were. We seek clarifying information in order to interpret events. Cartoon metaphors assist in clarifying ideas, but those received definitions easily become normalized, establishing "touchstones against which other definitions of reality can be measured."[50] Fictions evolve into Subjective Truths that organize our worlds. ●

NOTES

1. An earlier version of this paper was presented at the 1990 meeting of the Western Communication Association in Sacramento, CA.

2. *Studying Visual Communication*. ed. Larry Gross. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981), 156.

3. Jack McDonald, "Damn Those Toons," *Campaign* (February 1977): 7-8.

4. Scott Long, "The Political Cartoon: Journalism's Strongest Weapon," *Quill* (November 1962): 56.

5. Cited in Matthew Morrison, "The Role of the Political Cartoonist in Image Making," *Central States Speech Journal* 20 (Winter 1969): 252-260.

6. Not all researchers see political cartoons as inevitably debunking or propagandistic in nature. Indeed, cartoons exist that elevate their subjects, usually posthumously. But the debunking function is sufficiently pervasive and definitive of satire as a form that we may generalize about the satiric quality of most political cartoons. It is also this negativizing that provokes the most public reaction to cartoons, including attempts at censorship.

7. Ernst H. Grombrich, *Art and Illusion: A Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation* Bollingen Series 35, Andrew W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts 5, 2nd ed. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969), 345.

8. Worth's ideas on caricature and metaphor are developed in *Studying Visual Communication*, ed. Larry Gross (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press), 1981.

9. Kevin Kallaugher [KAL] and Tony Auth also depicted Bush as a cheerleader; in Auth's cartoon the reference was to Reagan's Iran-Contra dealings, as well.

10. George Lakoff and M. Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 1980.

11. Ernst H. Gombrich, *Meditations on a Hobby Horse*, 4th ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 1985.

12. The cartoons cited in this article were part of a larger group of 2,752 political cartoons about the 1988 Presidential campaign collected between August 1986, and November 1988, from twenty-five daily newspapers, two weekly newspapers, and three cartoon specialty publications. An expanded study of cartoons about the 1988 Presidential campaign can be found in Janis L. Edwards, "Pictorial Images as Narratives: Rhetorical Activation in Campaign 88 Political Cartoons" (Ph.D. diss., University of Massachusetts, Amherst, 1993).

13. Patrick Oliphant, *Des Moines Register*, 1 March 1987, 2C; and Bill Schorr, "Hello, Mom?" *Washington Post*, 7 March 1987, A23.

14. Brian Duffy, *Des Moines Register*, 1 September 1987, A1.

15. Jeff MacNelly, *Quad City Times*, 30 August 1987, A4.

16. Tom Meyer, *Washington Post Weekly Edition*, 4 January 1988, 30.

17. Jim Morin, "Whosiers," *San Francisco Examiner* 7 April 1987, B8.

18. Duffy, *Des Moines Register* 9 October 1987, 1; and 1 January 1988, 1.

19. Edward Gamble, "...And When the Dust Finally Cleared, A Champion Stepped Forward," *Washington Post Weekly Edition*, 30, May - 5 June 1988, 4.

20. Cartoons which framed the Seven Dwarfs metaphor without using detailed portraiture included Oliphant, *Massachusetts Daily Collegian*, 9 September 1987, 11; and MacNelly, *Daily Hampshire Gazette*, 9 September 1987, 6.

21. Jim Borgman, *Washington Post Weekly Edition*, 14 December 1987, 30.

22. Meyer, *Washington Post Weekly Edition*, 19 October 1987, 30.

23. Oliphant, *Massachusetts Daily Collegian*, 9 September 1987, 11.

24. Cuomo, along with Senators Bill Bradley and Sam Nunn, was also removed from the Seven Dwarfs "Mining and Whining Company" in a cartoon by MacNelly, *Daily Hampshire Gazette*, 2 September 1987, 17A.

25. Borgman, *Washington Post Weekly Edition*, 14 December 1987, 30.

26. The responsibility of Democrats for the "Wee George" characterization was reported by Jeff Greenfield of ABC, cited in Bob Wisehart, "A Plea to ABC: Don't Neglect Convention Coverage." *Sacramento Bee*, 25 July 1988, B6.

27. Doug Marlette, *The Sacramento Bee*, 16 August 1988, B15.

28. KAL, *Boston Globe*, 3 July 1988, A32; and Auth, *Washington Post Weekly Edition*, 9 May 1988, 14.

29. Dennis Renault, *The Sacramento Bee*, 17 February 1988, B4.

30. Borgman, *Sacramento Bee*, 25 August 1988, B7.

31. Mike Keefe, *Political Pix*, 7 March 1988.

32. Herblock's pussycat appeared in the *Boston Globe*, 26 October 1988, A 37. At least three cartoonists put Bush in a tiger costume: Jeff Danziger, *Daily Hampshire Gazette*, 7 November 1987, 6; Oliphant, *Washington Post Weekly Edition*, 2 November 1987, 30; Bob Sullivan, "Who's Wimpy?" *Bull's Eye* (December 1988): 1.

33. Bob Gorrell, *San Diego Union*, 18 May 1987, B-7.

34. Auth, "George Bush Expressing Reservations," *Santa Cruz Comic News* (January 1988); and Willis, *New York Times*, 22 February 1987, 2.

35. Steve Kelley, "The Veeping Game," *Holyoke Telegram-Tribrune*, 22 August 1988, 6.

36. Paul Szep, *Boston Globe*, 23 December 1987, 18.

37. During the Gulf War, Oliphant put the purse away in a closet. At other times, when Oliphant was particularly vexed with Bush's leadership qualities, he embellished on the metaphor by completing the costume and depicting Bush as an old lady in a long, old-fashioned dress.

38. Gamble, "Faithful companion!" *Washington Post Weekly Edition*, 13 June 1988, 30.

39. "Gone with the Wimp" was a creation by Marlette, *Sacramento Bee*, 15 March 1988, B15. He used the same image several days earlier picturing all the candidates under the slogan, "Gone with the Winner." The "Wimpy" reference was Danziger's, "George Gets MAD," *Daily Hampshire Gazette*, 29 January 1988, 6.

40. Keefe, *Political Pix*, 20 June 1988.

41. Herblock, *Washington Post*, 26 August 1988, A20.

42. Sinn Graff, *New York Times*, 4 September 1988, 3E.

43. Susan F. Rasky, "Army of Cartoonists Begins Hunt for Fodder," *New York Times*, 18 January 1989, B8.

44. Christopher Matthews, "Cold War Astrologer, " *San Francisco Examiner*, 18 March 1990, A 21.

45. Phil Duncan, "Quayle Makes Bush Look Good in '92," *Daily Hampshire Gazette*, 2 July 1990, 6.

46. Once the cartoonists shifted the diminishing cartoons to Bush and Dukakis won his party's nomination, the Seven Dwarfs metaphor disappeared. In reality, Dukakis was shorter than Bush, and this difference was often exaggerated in cartoons without any added metaphorical layer.

47. Three commonly cited sources that discuss the presence or absence of the direct persuasive power of editorial cartoons are Del Brinkman, "Do Editorial Cartoons and Editorials Change Opinions?" *Journalism Quarterly* 45:4 (Winter 1968): 724-726; LeRoy M. Carl, "Editorial Cartoons Fail to Reach Many Readers," *Journalism Quarterly* 54:3 (Autumn 1968): 533-535; Matthew C. Morrison, "The Role of the Political Cartoonist in Image Making," *Central States Speech Journal* 20 (Winter 1969): 252-260; and Martin J. Medhurst and Michael A. DeSousa, "The Editorial Cartoon as Visual Rhetoric: Rethinking Boss Tweed," *Journal of Visual Verbal Languaging* Fall 1982: 52-61. Generally speaking, satire does have persuasive effects on those who understand its meaning, according to Charles R. Gruner, "Ad Hominem Satire as a Persuader: An Experiment," *Journalism Quarterly* 48 (Spring 1971): 128-131. Willem Langeveld argues that cartoons are intended to reach those most interested in politics and can persuade people to pity the beleaguered subject in "Political Cartoons as a Medium of Political Communication," *International Journal of Political Education* December 1981: 343-371.

48. Michael A. DeSousa and Martin J. Medhurst, "Political Cartoons and American Culture: Significant Symbols of Campaign 1980," *Studies in Visual Communication* (Winter 1982): 84-97.

49. These expectations resumed speed by 1992, when the dominant metaphor cluster applied to the three top candidates was more one of authenticity than of diminishment.

50. DeSousa and Medhurst, "Political Cartoons and American Culture," 90.

emanata

Mort Walker in his ***Lexicon of Comicana*** *invented the term "emanata" to describe the graphic devices used by cartoonists to describe "what is going on inside" their characters. This occasional feature of* ***Inks*** *is intended to provide an opportunity for commentary, anecdotes of interest and historical sketches. Readers interested in writing such a feature are invited to contact the editor.*

Gib Crockett: A Washington Star Still Undimmed

by S. L. Harrison

On a snowy afternoon last March, Gibson Crockett, former editorial cartoonist for the *Washington Evening Star*, took time from a busy day to chat in his Olney, Maryland, studio. His cluttered work room, crammed with art and mementos, testifies to a lifetime of activity. A massive Dean Cornwall oil dominates the stairwell; the walls are filled with original art from people like J. N. "Ding" Darling, Milton Caniff, Dorman H. Smith, Gordon Grant and, of course, Crockett's own art. There are dozens of football program covers—he did the Army-Navy classics for forty-one years—and countless photographs inscribed to the artist from Washington's greats: Presidents Truman, Eisenhower, Nixon, Johnson, Reagan, Bush and other national figures. Awaiting attention on a large easel is a portrait in progress and several other finished pieces are stacked nearby, ready for delivery. Portraits have long been a staple of his privately-commissioned work, often of corporate leaders and judges. He is especially proud of the one he did of Senator Harry Flood Byrd, the long-time Democratic power from Virginia, brother of explorer Admiral Richard E. Byrd.

Crockett, now eighty-two, has not slowed down since his retirement in 1975 from the *Star*. "Hell, I'm busier now than I ever was," he says. His work in progress affirms that statement. Oils, watercolors, caricatures and cartoons flow from his cluttered studio. Crockett is an accomplished wood worker as well, and he turns out fine furniture and carvings. He has more markets for his work than he can satisfy.

Crockett, a six-footer with a shock of white hair, is fit and trim, as testy and acerbic as one might expect from a veteran of yesteryear's newsroom. Those were the days, Crockett says, when "a cartoonist did everything" and was expected to do it fast and do it well. "We worked hard in those days."

A self-taught artist, Crockett remembers that from high school on he wanted to do cartooning. That urge began in Kingsport, Tennessee, when he saw a friend draw Maggie and Jiggs, from the popular George MacManus comic strip *Bringing Up Father*. "I could do that," he recalls, "and I was hooked." His English teacher confiscated one of his early efforts, complimented him on the good likeness, but still made him stay after school. "She asked me for it and thanked me, though," he chuckles.

Crockett's earliest published work was for his high school annual. He was soon being paid for line drawings of vegetables used in grocery store windows. He did much the same work after he journeyed to Washington, D. C., in the early 1930s to find an art job. His primary goal was to be an illustrator.

"I was a disciple of Harry Anderson," Crockett remembers, and one of Anderson's bold watercolors is displayed in his studio. When he actively attempted to break into the field, however, the time of mass market magazines was ebbing. He did some free-lance for the Treasury Department and more grocery ad work. His big break came because "I was in the right place at the right time" when a family friend introduced him to Jim Berryman. The Berrymans, father Cliff and son Jim, were the editorial cartoonists for the *Washington Evening Star*.

In the 1930s the *Evening Star*, Washington's preeminent newspaper, dominated the local market over the tabloid *Daily News*, the morning *Post*, and the *Times-Herald*. Clifford

"GEORGE—I'D LIKE TO EXPLAIN THE CAMBODIAN SITUATION TO YOU!"

Reprinted by permission of Gib Crockett.

Berryman was a legend in Washington, having won fame in 1902 with his *Washington Post* cartoon, "Drawing the Line," that originated the Teddy Bear craze. The character appeared in his cartoons for the next fifty years. His son Jim saw "promise" in Crockett's portfolio and convinced his father (Crockett reports that Jim always addressed the senior Berryman as "father," even in the office) to take on Crockett as an apprentice at no pay.

Crockett recalls that "Jim really wanted someone to do the dirty work around the office and picked me." Jim, who followed his father as editorial cartoonist, took a leisurely approach to work and frequently had a copy boy bring his cartoon from home. As a result of this, Crockett did a great deal of the art work around the *Star*.

Crockett did well and was rewarded six months later: "I was hired December 1933, with a paid position at $10 a week. In the Depression, you were lucky to have any job. I considered myself fortunate." He did sports cartooning—Crockett admits he copied "or tried to" the work of Willard Mullin, the sports cartoonist for the *New York World-Telegram*—and spot cartooning and illustrations for the newspaper. From time to time he contributed ideas for editorial cartoons to both Berrymans, "who were always grateful," Crockett comments. In 1947, when Cliff Berryman's health began to fail, Crockett was ordered by editor Benjamin McKelway to produce editorial cartoons on his own. He started with one a week, on Saturdays. After Cliff Berryman died on Armistice Day 1949 in his office at the *Star*, Crockett shared the work with Jim Berryman. After Jim retired in 1964, Crockett took over full-time duties. His work was first distributed nationally by King Features Syndicate, and after 1964 the Star Syndicate was formed. "It wasn't too successful," Crockett recalls.

"I never really wanted to be an editorial cartoonist," Crockett insists. The *Star*, like many newspapers of that era, occasionally carried his cartoons on the front page. Crockett's work attracted attention because it was fresh and attractive. His early inspiration came from Dorman H. Smith, the widely syndicated Hearst cartoonist whose crisp style appealed to the young man. But Crockett experimented, too, with pen and wash, ink and lithograph, Ben Day and tone and, at times, crayon on coquille. "I did what I felt like doing," Crockett explains.

The elder Berryman, the "old man," as Crockett affectionately refers to Clifford, once squinted up his eye (he was blind in the other) and told him: "A bad idea can be saved by a good drawing, but a good idea can be ruined by a bad drawing." Another time Cliff Berryman observed: "A cartoonist is an artist with a twisted mind." Crockett agrees with both observations.

The *Star* was a conservative newspaper and Crockett never had any trouble presenting that point of view; it was his own and his ideas and outlook were in harmony with the newspaper's editorial stance. If a "ruckus" did arise—and pungent cartoons occasionally create controversy— his editors always backed him, but warned "just don't do it again," Crockett says. But the *Star* did have specific inflexible rules regarding cartoons: no harsh caricatures (and partly for this reason Crockett executed well-drawn miniature portraits in his cartoons); never depict a woman in a situation that could embarrass her (simply good manners); never, ever, be vicious to anyone; and no hard stereotypes.

"You don't have to be vicious to be a good cartoonist. I never was and neither were the Berrymans," Crockett says. "Humor can be sly and subtle without being hurtful." Crockett followed all those rules, but nonetheless managed to rouse the wrath of his targets—Harry Truman, Eisenhower, and Nixon—from time to time, he recalls with a smile.

"Old Harry really raised cain once. I did a cartoon showing him with his head buried in the sand, dodging Congress, down at his vacation place in Key West, Florida. Well, all hell broke loose. The summer White House barred the *Star* correspondent, Joe Fox, from press conferences for a week, but Harry finally simmered down." Crockett still chuckles over the incident: "Those were interesting times and people.

But every one of them still asked me for the original cartoon," Crockett said.

Crockett's work was widely reprinted, and that brings up a well-remembered grievance: "A lot of newspapers in those days simply ran your stuff without bothering to pay you a cent, not that they paid much. I recall you got about $10, but often you didn't get that."

Crockett is still a regular at suburban Washington's Burning Tree Country Club, where some three hundred of his drawings are arrayed on its "Wall of Fame," portraying the politicians and powerful figures of Washington. "They run the country from that place," Crockett states. One of his minor irritations of retirement is requests from collectors. "These people pester you to death," he says, "and I don't bother with any of them." But his words belie his deeds.

Everyone in the community knows that Gib Crockett will produce a cartoon for a worthy charity or local fund-raiser to help a good cause. He will grouse, but the twinkle in his eyes gives him away every time.

Crockett is as opinionated as ever. On the state of contemporary editorial cartoonists: "Most of them can't draw worth a damn. Most of them want to do comic strips. They're too lazy to come up with good political stuff. They settle for an easy gag. Most of them are gag artists and settle for superficial stuff." And that goes for many of today's newspapers, according to Crockett. "Most of them are nothing more than biased political propaganda sheets; a lot of the so-called news is nothing more than opinion." Today's obsession with political correctness irks Crockett.

Asked for an opinion on any specific contemporary cartoonist, Crockett smiles and says, "I'd rather have a 'No comment' on personalities." But he tempers any implied criticism with the observation that "even ol' Ding Darling would do mostly humorous stuff that hardly ever hurt anybody's feelings." He recalls a couple of his contemporaries, without naming names, as "ornery cusses" but most were pretty nice guys, he concedes.

The prizes that Crockett collected attest to his excellent work: the Freedom Foundation Medal, and he shared (with Jim Berryman) the Overseas Press Club's Headliner Award. The Treasury Department awarded him a citation of merit for his work to promote War Bonds. The Library of Congress holds hundreds of original Crockett cartoons and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Library in Washington, D.C. has a large number on microfilm as well. Other originals are held in the presidential libraries of Truman, Eisenhower, Ford, Johnson and Nixon.

Gib Crockett is going strong and he has not completely given up hope for editorial cartooning in America: "There's still some good work out there." Of one thing Crockett is certain, however: "Cliff Berryman was right, all the good ones have a twisted mind." ●

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'WHY BREAK UP A HAPPY FAMILY?'

resources

The Comic Art Collection in the Michigan State University Libraries

by Randall W. Scott

The Comic Art Collection at Michigan State University (MSU) began as a single facet in a special collection of which it is still only a part: The Russel B. Nye Popular Culture Collection. Nye, an English professor at MSU, established the collection in the course of working on his book *The Unembarrassed Muse.* Although comics is clearly the largest and fastest-growing part of the Nye Collection, its other components are still significant. Popular performing arts, popular information, and popular fiction are the other three areas of the original collection, given here in order of least to most complete and useful. "Popular performing arts" includes books and magazines about motion pictures and television, with some tent-show scripts and records. "Popular information" includes a historical textbook collection, as well as self-help books of many kinds, both old and new. "Popular fiction" means mass genre fiction: romance, mystery, western, science fiction, fantasy, girls' and boys' series books, and as an unusual specialty, Sunday School fiction of every denomination. Overwhelmingly, the Nye Collection is a collection of published works and not an archive of unique or rare items. Space is committed to common or once-common materials that have historically been denied space in research libraries. The total size of the Nye Collection is approximately 135,000 different items, or 50,000 titles of which 35,000 are books and 15,000 are periodicals.

The comics collection itself is truly a comics collection, and is not intended to be either a cartoon collection or a humor collection. The nature of comics is to combine writing and drawing, but we do not consider ourselves collectors of art or of literature, but of comics. Within this definition, we would like eventually, perhaps by the end of the twentieth century, to begin using the word "comprehensive" for our collection of comic books published in the United States. The basis of the collection was a donation of 5,000 comic books made by Professor Nye in 1970, and the number of comic books has grown to almost 100,000 as of late 1994. There is no reliable estimate of how many comic books have been published in the United States, but perhaps MSU has about half of the available works. The purchase of microfilm whenever possible helps to keep the problem of storage space under control.

Although the concentration on comic books is primary, much effort goes into the collecting of books, magazines and offprints about comics. The goal here is to provide the researcher with everything that has already been written about the comics research topic at hand. For undergraduate users, this goal is accomplished most of the time. For faculty and visiting scholars, we can usually produce a pleasant surprise or two, but there remain plenty of elusive items. The collection includes at least 1,000 titles that are classified as reference or history and criticism, and since many of these titles are periodicals, particularly fanzines, this accounts for about 5,000 items. An annotated list of our reference materials was published in 1988 as *Comic Books and Strips: An Information Sourcebook.*[1]

Our third major concentration is on comic strips. Since we do not collect original art or syndicate proofs, the Nye Collection's comic strips are typically in the form of bound reprint volumes as published

either for nostalgic or historical purposes, or for newsstand paperback distribution. We make an effort to obtain every such collection. Again, this is usually sufficient for our undergraduate users, but for advanced scholars the typical lack of completeness and original publication information in book collections is a problem. In some cases these books can be used to direct scholars toward appropriate microfilm of newspapers. Also part of the collection are more than five hundred comic strip scrapbooks as collected by Rodney Ford of Sacramento, California, including approximately 300,000 daily newspaper strips mounted in order, two years per volume. Some volumes are earlier, but the Ford scrapbooks mainly cover the years 1945 to 1980. In all, there are about 2,000 titles in this part of the comic strip collection. Another collection of more than 100,000 separate comic strips is maintained, sorted into envelopes by subject or keyword. There are currently 10,000 separate envelopes, from aardvark to zwieback. This project began in 1982, but older strips are being integrated as they become available.

The Comic Art Collection is not limited to comics of the United States. There are approximately 1,000 items each from England, France, and Mexico, five hundred each from Canada and Japan, and more than one hundred each from Argentina, Brazil, Germany, Italy, Korea, and Spain. Smaller collections are on hand from at least twenty-five other nations, including African, Asian, and Scandinavian countries. The collection is likewise not limited to newsstand publications, but includes underground, newwave, independent, gay, lesbian, religious, pornographic, political, propaganda, advertising, educational and many uncategorizable comics. Items related to comics, including tie-in novels, books illustrated by comics artists, licensed-character coloring books and comics crossovers to animation, gaming, live-action films and toys are also collected. Several hundred clipping files on comics topics, and the archives of Eclipse Comics, are also included in the collection and its catalog.

The major mode of acquisition for the Comic Art Collection is donation. Hundreds of comics fans, dealers and collectors (and sometimes their mothers) have been generous to us. The Jim Haynes Golden Age Collection opened up the 1940s for us, for example, and the Steve Beery Batman Collection came as a major bequest in the 1990s. Most U.S. comic book publishers have sent free items at one time or another. The most notable of these is catherine yronwode, whose generosity before, during and since her editorship of Eclipse Comics has been instrumental to our growth. The largest single donor to the Nye Collection has been Anne Tracy, a staff member whose grasp of the thrift shop market is uncanny. The budget available is trifling compared with the skill and insight that yronwode and Tracy have applied to acquisitions.

Although the commitment of resources to selection, acquisition and storage of comics is considerable, an even greater emphasis has been placed on cataloging and indexing. Since 1990, when work began on the catalog which was published in book form by Greenwood Press in 1993, an intensive cataloging effort has been going on.[2] More than 15,000 comics titles are now searchable in the Michigan State University Libraries' online catalog, and the current rate of increase is two hundred titles per month. An innovative system of subject analysis includes entries for genre, language and national origin when appropriate. The catalog is fully searchable through Internet connections. Although the records are visible in the OCLC utility, the actual MSU cataloging is typically much enhanced, particularly with current holdings data for our many thousands of serials.

An index and a catalog are different things, and the index to the Comic Art Collection is quite different from its catalog. The index is a series of loose-leaf notebooks containing about 3,500 pages of data on items in the collection. This is data keyed to the call numbers in our stacks, but typically goes deeper than a cataloging record would go. Many thousands of individual comic books are listed under story titles, writers, pencilers and inkers, for example. Peter Coogan's index to *Comics Journal* is partially integrated, as is the index to *Comics Interview*. Back-of-the-book indexes to a dozen histories of and reference books on comics are included. This index grows at random until a request is made that spurs activity in a certain area. An impending visit by a scholar working on African American heroes, an internship by a student helping to organize the Latin American comics, and an exhibit on the works of Art Spiegelman are recent events that have prompted specific enhancements to our index, enhancements that are now available on-site to future scholars. Remote users may request photocopies or ASCII files on topics of interest, though the turnaround time is at least one week. It is best to make such requests by telephone.

None of the materials in the Comic Art Collection circulate to users, either locally or through interlibrary loan. Limited interlibrary lending via photocopy is available, when allowed by the condition of the material requested and by copyright regulations. In making decisions about requesting interlibrary loan service, or about traveling to East Lansing for a visit, it is best to search the Nye Collection catalog in advance via the Internet to confirm its holdings. The reading room is available from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, and on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. when the university is in session. Specific questions about hours, policies, indexing and holdings can be answered by telephoning (517) 355-3770, or e-mail: 20676AXT@MSU.edu. ●

NOTES

1. Randall W. Scott, *Comic Books and Strips: An Information Sourcebook* (Phoenix, AZ: Oryx Press, 1988).

2. Randall W. Scott, *The Comic Art Collection Catalog*, Bibliographies and Indexes in Popular Culture, no. 2 (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993).

book reviews

Our Cancer Year

by Joyce Brabner and Harvey Pekar

Illustrations by Frank Stack

Reviewed by Charles Hatfield

Written by Joyce Brabner and Harvey Pekar, and drawn by Frank Stack, *Our Cancer Year* speaks to a universally relevant subject: the physical and psychological struggle to overcome a life-threatening illness. A memoir of 1990-1991, the year Pekar underwent treatment for lymphoma, *Our Cancer Year* combines the autobiographical intimacy of Pekar's landmark comic book series *American Splendor* with the sociopolitical sweep of Brabner's documentary comic books (*Real War Stories, Brought to Light*). Bracing in its emotional honesty, scrupulous in its respect for small details, this work demonstrates the emotional and didactic potential of nonfiction comic books—while also suggesting, unfortunately, the difficulties which may attend writer/artist collaborations.

Our Cancer Year both avoids the confessional guilt-tripping of many first-person narratives and sets a new standard for autobiographical intimacy. Brabner and Pekar's honesty is comprehensive, and the story they tell is more rounded and revealing than any story written by a single hand could be. When, for example, Harvey begins to panic during Joyce's visit to Israel, we watch him disclose his "separation anxiety" to Slim, the custodian, and thus we become privy to the way Harvey represents Joyce to others: "She's supposed to come back in about a week, but I dunno. Maybe she won't. She gets caught up in her work." Similarly, the book reveals the way Joyce portrays Harvey to others ("Harvey's a compulsive nut, plain and simple"), and repeatedly shows her intervening behind the scenes on Harvey's behalf. We even watch Joyce lie to Harvey for his own good (pretending that a mild painkiller, for instance, is morphine). One imagines that the process of collaborating on this book must have been revelatory for both.

This kind of cooperative storytelling, rendered in pictures by third-person observer Frank Stack, suggests why Pekar and Brabner choose to work in the graphic narrative form. The visual-verbal blending of the genre invites dramatic intimacy, while at the same time allowing readers to distance themselves from the characters, to *see* them as we might see the actors in a play, negotiating complex relationships with each other and revealing themselves in ways which conventional autobiography cannot. Readers of Pekar's *American Splendor* will recognize this tension between intimacy and distance, a technique crucial to Pekar's often self-deprecating irony.

The book deftly combines two interlocking plots: Harvey's intensely painful treatment for cancer and Joyce's anxious efforts to care for a group of long-distance friends, young peace activists from Cambodia and the Middle East. As chemotherapy begins to wreak havoc on Harvey's body, Joyce's efforts to stay in touch with her friends are given special urgency by escalating political tensions which finally erupt into the Persian Gulf War. These two plot threads converge in the finale, which finds Harvey "clean" and Joyce's student friends reunited at their place. This interweaving of plots underscores one of *Our Cancer Year*'s central themes: the sharing of troubles helps alleviate them.

Repeatedly *Our Cancer Year* acknowledges how hard it is to insist on self-sufficiency in times of distress, and suggests the importance of friends, caregivers, and family. As a friend advises, "Let someone help you . . . It will be better for both of you." The idea of community becomes central, as we see the couple reluctantly reach out, beyond the wife-and-husband dyad. Joyce helps Harvey overcome his reluctance to contact his own family, while Delores, a live-in nurse, helps Joyce take care of Harvey and Harvey take care of himself. The book suggests the impossibility of coping with traumatic illness or other personal crises on one's own; its final pages, in which Joyce's network of friends gathers together, show the power of friendship to ease pain.

The book is moving. When Harvey loses his wedding ring due to the shrivelling of his hand during chemotherapy, we understand Joyce's effort to hide just how bad this makes her feel; when she and Delores find the ring in the book's penultimate chapter, and slip it onto Harvey's dinner plate for him to discover, we can empathize with the profound pleasure which this little recovery brings. This kind of emotional appeal is all the more powerful in light of the book's devastating fidelity to emotional truth: we witness Harvey contemplat-

THEN THE ONCOLOGIST WHO SAW HIM YESTERDAY COMES IN AGAIN.
LOOK, DR. FISHER, I C'N WALK.
I SEE. WE'LL JUST CANCEL THE PHYSICAL THERAPY, SLAP YOU IN A CHAIR, GIVE YOU YOUR CHEMO AND SEND YOU HOME.
SLAM!
HUH? WHAT ABOUT THE BAKING SODA I'M STROSED TO TAKE FOR TWENTY FOUR HOURS BEFORE I GET THIS NEXT CHEMO? I'M NOT READY.
HE'S CANCELING MY PHYSICAL THERAPY, I'M NOT GETTING A CHANCE TO FIND OUT ABOUT MY HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE, I'M GETTING BOOTED OUT!
WHAT'LL I DO?
HE'S FEELING STRANGELY EUPHORIC
WAIT A MINUTE! THEY DIDN'T FIND ANY RECURRENCE OF CANCER IN MY CAT SCAN. I'M CLEAN NOW. FUCK THIS SHIT, I'M CHECKING OUTTA THIS PLACE AND GOING BACK TWORK.

ing suicide, worrying about the survival of his marriage, and trying to cope with the challenge of returning to work after a long absence; we see the couple negotiating and fighting with each other repeatedly, and see also their efforts to get along, to lift each other up, to give and protect; we witness Joyce's tenacity, her combativeness, and at times her rage, as she struggles to take care of Harvey, her friends, and herself.

Readers expecting a booklength *American Splendor* may be surprised to discover that Brabner's perspective is well represented throughout, as indeed it had to be. Some of *Our Cancer Year*'s most effective scenes could only have been written from Brabner's perspective as caregiver and soulmate, if only because Pekar could not have clearly remembered these disturbing moments without her help. But the Brabner/Pekar partnership goes beyond getting the facts straight. Indeed, more than anything, this partnership is what *Our Cancer Year* is really all about. The book is *about* collaboration—one of the most persuasive treatments of marriage that I have seen.

Unfortunately, the collaboration between the two writers and the artist is less encouraging. Visually *Our Cancer Year* bears signs of struggle. While the narrative is carefully broken down into layouts which emphasize key moments and characters, and Stack's compositions are consistently effective, his renderings sometimes look dirty and smeared, and some pages look as though they have been worked over to the point of near-disintegration. Many pages have a ragged, pasted-up look, with black and white hairlines running through the artwork, suggesting different elements that have been laboriously sutured together. Occasional smears and clots of ink and uneven lines breaking through panel borders give the book a raw, diary-like quality that is often effective, but at times simply ugly. This is compounded, at least in my copy of the book, by several pages that have a faded, washed-out appearance, with Stack's spotted blacks and scratchy linework sabotaged by bleached-out printing.

The book's lettering is tough on the eye. Word balloons and captions are lettered, not by hand, but in a computer font which attempts to mimic the look of hand-lettering. The result recalls the E.C. comic books produced by Al Feldstein and Bill Gaines in the early 1950s: there is a stiffness to the text which resists integration with the artwork, and the pages are too obviously the product of an uneasy compromise between machine and human effort. Yet, unlike the vintage E.C.s, the pages in *Our Cancer Year* seem to have been drawn first and pasted with captions afterwards, despite the fact that they were probably laid out by Pekar and Brabner themselves. The end product suggests a long and difficult labor. Again, this sometimes works to its advantage, but often makes the book harder to read than it should be.

Stack is hobbled, not by the demands of the story, but by the *appearance* of the written text. He deserves better. His use of dense, spotted blacks and heavy crosshatching, relieved by occasional pages of light, almost gestural artwork, is dramatic and intelligent. In many scenes his rough, impressionistic renderings suit the story perfectly, amplifying its emotional impact—as in one extraordinary panel, for example, recalling Pekar's agonizing bout with shingles, or a two-page sequence in which Brabner, overcome by frustration, slaps her prostrate husband repeatedly. The

energy of Stack's rendering is powerful at such moments. Another visual standout is the extended sequence in which Harvey, woozy from an unaccustomed drug dosage, hallucinates and seems to slip in and out of reality. The exploded panels and frantic compositions on these pages are quite effective. Unfortunately, other parts of the book seem messy for no particular reason, and some pages, with their pasted-up text and visible seams, look tired. This is a shame. *Our Cancer Year*, despite such flaws in presentation, is a genuinely moving tale, one in which narrative breakdown, panel layout, and composition (three cruxes of comic art, as R.C. Harvey suggests in *The Art of the Funnies*) serve the story well. While *Our Cancer Year*'s use of graphic narrative is undeniably powerful, it could have been even more so, had its visuals not been so uneven.

Such criticisms should not eclipse what Brabner, Pekar, and Stack have accomplished. On rereading *Our Cancer Year*, I am struck by the narrative's coherence, emotional intensity, and unswerving fidelity to real life. This story is light years away from the reflexive pessimism which dominates much of the alternative comic book market. The writers' emotional investment in the project is obvious, and encourages this reader to believe in the future of adult comic books. *Our Cancer Year* is a book which should go a long way toward exploding mainstream preconceptions about this format, and a title to which readers will want to return again and again. ●

Joyce Brabner and Harvey Pekar. *Our Cancer Year*. Illustrations by Frank Stack. Four Walls Eight Windows. 1994. 224 p. ISBN 1-56858-011-8 pap. $17.95

Dick Tracy and American Culture: Morality and Mythology, Text and Context

by Garyn G. Roberts

Reviewed by Kenneth Barker

I wish this review could be more positive since Chester Gould's *Dick Tracy* deserves careful analysis and Garyn G. Roberts brings enthusiasm to his work. *Dick Tracy and American Culture: Morality and Mythology, Text and Context* contains a wealth of descriptive material on this newspaper comic strip and other forms of popular culture related to it such as toys, books, and films; but the book fails to provide the sustained critical analysis which is needed. It is repetitious and disjointed. The text wanders back and forth without a controlling thesis and could have been substantially reduced without any great loss of content.

To be sure Roberts mentions several important issues. For example, Gould obviously believed that crime should not pay, even if at times it obviously did. He also believed that good should prevail over evil even though such a moral conviction is often put to the test. And he clearly opposed the use of violence on the part of criminals. But to what extent did Gould condone the use of violence on the part of the forces of law and order? This critical question does not receive the attention it merits.

Roberts rightly, in my opinion, rejects the thesis of Alan Gowans that Chester Gould used law and order as a cover for "institutionalized violence to minority groups"; but his reassurance that Gould's narratives do "not celebrate gratuitous violence or inspire violent antisocial behavior" is an inadequate response. Few if any would claim that Gould promoted gratuitous violence. The crucial issue is whether he condoned the use of violence in a noble cause, i.e. the suppression of evil. Despite Roberts's rejection of an article to this effect in the 28 June 1968 issue of *Time* (which Roberts states "essentially accused *Dick Tracy* of inspiring Sirhan Sirhan to assassinate Robert Kennedy"), there is evidence to suggest that Gould did sometimes promote the use of violence, albeit in what he perceived to be a good cause.

One also finds the all too predictable put-down of Frederick Wertham's work. Roberts' passage only provides an added aggravation because Wertham at least discussed the issue with some reflective depth. Whether Wertham's book is wholly convincing or not, it deserves careful criticism, not casual dismissal.

Apart from its failure to sustain a major thesis, the book contains a number of questionable comments. One is the statement that "the adventure strip had established itself as the second and final comic strip genre," the first being the humor strip. The newspaper comic strip cannot be neatly divided into these two basic types. Serious social commentary can be found in many of the early "comic" pages. Where

Dick Tracy, 25 December 1933

TRACY, SOMETHING TELLS ME IF YOU GO THROUGH WITH THIS ONE-MAN WAR ON RACKETEERS. IT'LL BE YOUR END! THEY'LL GET YOU!
CHIEF, YOU CAN QUOTE ME AS SAYING- I'M GOING THROUGH WITH IT!

would Roberts place *Doonesbury* and *Bloom County*?

Equally questionable is the statement that "very few of the classic comic strips begun in the first half of the twentieth century have survived the retirement of their original creative forces." The exceptions given are *Moon Mullins*, *Gasoline Alley*, *Little Orphan Annie*, and *Dick Tracy*. In fact a great many comic strips have survived the death or retirement of their original cartoonist though, admittedly, the quality of the successor's work was often uneven.

Also suspect is Roberts's comment that "only in America, where there is a free press and free speech was this [the portrayal of gangland violence on the comics page] possible." The publication of such newspaper comic strips may have been limited to the U. S. (though I doubt even that); but to suggest they were only possible in the U. S. is blatantly provincial.

A chapter titled "The People Behind *Dick Tracy*" provides biographical information on cartoonists and writers associated with the comic strip. The sixteen page bibliography lists the author's selections of the "very best work done on the topic." The book contains some factual mistakes (for instance, *Jim Hardy* began 18 June 1936, not 9 May 1936), but there are remarkably few typographical errors. ●

Garyn G. Roberts. *Dick Tracy and American Culture: Morality and Mythology, Text and Context.* McFarland. 1993. notes. bibl. index. ISBN 0-89950-880-4 hback. $45.00

Comic Art of Europe: An International Comprehensive Bibliography

by John A. Lent

Reviewed by Randall W. Scott

The bibliography of European comic art has taken a great leap forward with this book. Previous to this, our most recent bibliography of largely European topics and sources was Renate Neumann's *Bibliographie zur Comic-Sekundärliteratur* (1987). Neumann's book has a total of only about 2,700 entries, compared to the 8,809 entries provided by *Comic Art of Europe*. This is a big book, probably bigger than any of us expected, and an excellent book, recommended to all research libraries and and to all scholars of European comic art, graphic art, and popular culture.

The entries in this bibliography are descriptively complete for the most part, but they are not annotated for content. The citations are categorized by country and usually by subheadings within each country. To give an idea of the scope of the book, for example, the subheadings for France are: references, general studies, historical aspects, cartoonists and caricaturists, characters and titles, animation, caricature, cartoons, comic books, comic strips, and political cartoons. Major individuals and titles have separate sections within the appropriate categories. The organization of the entries is comprehensible and useful, and makes up for the lack of annotations to a comfortable degree.

The indexes are not so well organized, being divided into five alphabets when one would have done just as well. Four of the alphabets share the running head "Subject Index," and thus quick references to the book are likely to fail through inattention, or become laborious as the user struggles through this traditional but deplorable mechanism.

To test the comprehensiveness of the compilation in an informal way, this reviewer retrieved, by another method, eighteen photocopied articles in German, about the use of comics in teaching. These articles dated from the 1970s, and were assembled by Kevin Carpenter of Oldenburg, Germany. Of the eighteen, ten were listed in Lent's bibliography. Of the eight articles not listed by Lent, five are arguably trivial, but three would surely have been listed if found. Even the "trivial" photocopies are as substantial as many of the things that are listed here, but perhaps this only proves what we must begin to suspect: the universe of writings about comic art is large and difficult. Even though one can always find more, this is a mature bibliography and it should be at least ten years before such a task will need to be done again.

Speaking as a comics librarian, it is clear to me that this nearly comprehensive bibliography and its companions will have a day-to-day impact. It is sobering to estimate that here at Michigan State University, where we have vigorously collected comic art material for twenty years, fewer than 20% of Lent's European citations are available in-house. This book will increase and focus the demands that researchers make. Improved bibliography will increase the need for inter-library lending, and so on. Books like this actually create jobs.

Comic Art of Europe is the third of a possible seven volume set. Three are already published, and a fourth will cover Africa, Asia, Australia and Oceania, Latin America, and the Caribbean. These books are scholarly events, and will be basic to us in our digging and scribbling for years to come. Congratulations are due to John Lent. ●

John A. Lent. *Comic Art of Europe: An International Comprehensive Bibliography.* Bibliographies and Indexes in Popular Culture, no. 5. Greenwood Press. 1994. xxii, 663 p. indexes. ISBN 0-313-28212-9 hback. $95.00

The Art of the Funnies: An Aesthetic History

by Robert C. Harvey

Reviewed by Ian Gordon

In his 1979 essay "The Aesthetics of the Comic Strips" published in the *Journal of Popular Culture*, Robert C. Harvey argued that serious critical discussion of comics required an articulated theory of comic aesthetics. This volume, which opens with a reworked version of that essay, offers a history of comic strip art that flows from Harvey's two main premises:

Comics are unique in the way they "weave word and picture together to achieve narrative purpose."

The criteria for evaluating comic strips can be found in the history of the form because artists gave different ingredients of the form their finest expression in the "great" strips.

Although *The Art of the Funnies* covers many of the same artists as Richard Marschall's *America's Great Comic-Strip Artists*—the usual suspects: McCay, Herriman, Segar, Raymond, Caniff, and the rest—Harvey explains why and how individual strips were great. For instance, Milton Caniff's *Terry and the Pirates* stands out as much for Caniff's witty counterpoising of images and text as it does for his use of chiaroscuro techniques. One of the strengths of Harvey's account is that he draws his explanation out of the comic strips he reproduces in the volume rather than expecting his audience to acknowledge intrinsically that his favorite artists are great.

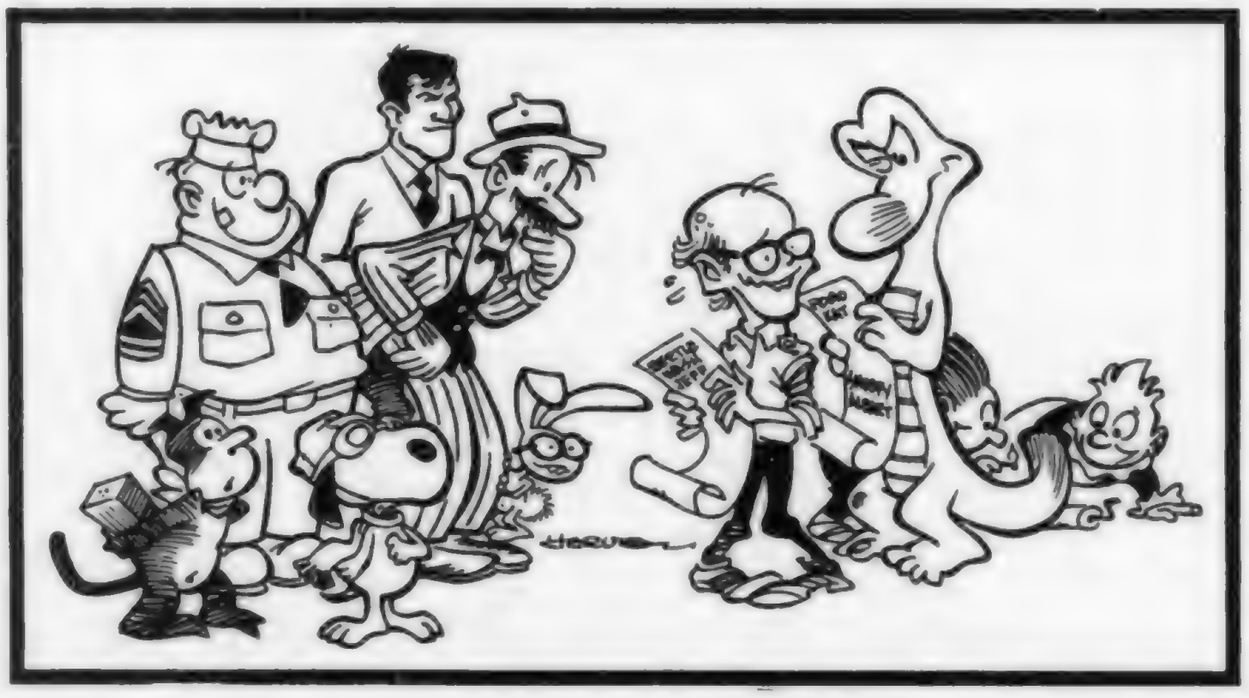
Harvey's careful argumentation sets him apart from other comic strip commentators. Whereas other writers seem to engage in conjecture and flights of fancy, Harvey footnotes the sources for his opinions and explains his logic. I also find it refreshing to read a work on comic strips in which, as far as I can tell from my own research, every date is correct. Another of Harvey's accomplishments is to extend the social context in which comics developed beyond the usual accounts about the growth of newspaper chains and features syndicates. He cites the importance of copyright laws and the maturation of consumerism in the 1920s as crucial factors that shaped comic strips. Harvey's attention to these sorts of details make his book a convincing read.

The aesthetic sensibilities Harvey brings to his readings of comic strips made me wish he had tackled the issue of caricature and racial stereotypes in comic art. He briefly touches on this subject when discussing Mort Walker's introduction of an African American character to *Beetle Bailey*, but a fuller examination seems in order. In *Comics: Ideology, Power, & The Critics*, Martin Barker dismissed comic art stereotypes as a non-issue in a field where all representation is caricature, but a fuller discussion of this issue seems warranted. To return to Caniff: what can we make of the Chinese sidekick Connie's language and visual representation compared to the mysterious sexuality of the other major Chinese character, the Dragon Lady? Harvey's suggestion that the strip's reader wanted sexy oriental women and, by extension, Yellow Kid-like Chinese cooks, and that presenting these characters gave the strip greater verisimilitude deserves further exploration.

I have two minor quibbles with Harvey. First, I think a work of history should be written in the past tense and he slips into present tense for dramatic effect on too many occasions. Second, he suggests that the comic strip in America achieved a form and importance it did not attain elsewhere. While comics may have achieved such a status in America before they did in other countries, the French, British, Japanese, and Australians would have trouble with this statement.

The Art of the Funnies is an important work in comic history. It would be a shame if Harvey's book were overshadowed by Scott McCloud's *Understanding Comics*. Comparisons are probably inevitable, but the works have different goals: Harvey delineates the aesthetic development of the form whereas McCloud tackles the broader structure of comic visual communication. Although lacking the color reproductions of Marschall's work, Harvey's book is probably the single best comic strip history currently available.

Robert C. Harvey. *The Art of the Funnies: An Aesthetic History*. University Press of Mississippi. 1994. 252 p. index. ISBN 0-87805-612-2 hback. $42.50; ISBN 0-87805-674-2 pap. $19.95



Cartoonometer: Taking the Pulse of the World's Cartoonists

by Joe Szabo and John A. Lent

Reviewed by V. Cullum Rogers

Like Gaul, *Cartoonometer* is divided into three parts. The largest, occupying nearly two-thirds of the book's 124 pages, consists of eighty drawings by seventy-seven cartoonists, ranging geographically and otherwise from *Garfield* creator Jim Davis to editorial cartoonist Deng Coy Miel of Singapore. These are interspersed with eighteen brief interviews, most reprinted from *WittyWorld* magazine, featuring eight artists from the U.S., two from Indonesia, and one each from Argentina, Cuba, the Czech Republic, England, France, India, the Netherlands and Russia.

What sets *Cartoonometer* apart from other global anthologies, however, is the opening section that reports on a survey conducted by Joe Szabo, the founder and editor of *WittyWorld*, and Dr. John A. Lent, an expert on cartoons and Third-World media. Hoping to find out what cartoonists around the world think of their profession, Szabo and Lent sent over 5,000 of them a questionnaire "touching upon facts and asking for opinions . . . [on] gender, age, expertise, earnings, motivations, and success rate, among other topics." They also asked the 5,000 to name the cartoonists they considered the best for art, ideas and overall excellence in both their own country and the world. Unfortunately for cartoon cliometrics, only 249 of those contacted bothered to return what Szabo and Lent cryptically call "usable" surveys, a response rate of just under five percent.

You do not have to be a statistician to sense that a self-selected, five percent response to a survey, especially a survey that includes questions about money, is unlikely to be reliable. Did you know—more pertinently, *can* you know—that the average cartoonist in India has an income 1,698 percent higher than the national average? That the typical cartoonist has won two or three international awards? That Thomas Lionar of Indonesia is the world's most respected caricaturist and editorial cartoonist Mikhail Zlatkovsky, formerly of Russia, the most highly regarded cartoonist overall? That a female Bulgarian cartoonist makes only $16 a year?

That last factoid is a bit shaky even by the loose standards of *Cartoonometer*—only one female Bulgarian cartoonist answered the survey, and for all I know she was telling the truth about herself. But even if some of the book's assertions are true (for instance, that female cartoonists make less than half as much as male ones), they are still little better than guesses: Just seventeen women answered the survey *in toto*, and only five of them offered information about their incomes. Szabo and Lent's Gang of 249 included fifty-nine Americans (the largest single group) and one Canadian, twenty-seven Bulgarians and only a handful of Africans. The authors rarely acknowledge the effect these quirky proportions might have had on their results. Nor do they ever say how their 5,000 guinea pigs were selected or how they decided a particular survey was "usable." Most seriously, they do not provide the exact wording of their questions (were they open-ended? multiple choice?), so there is no way to tell what gaps and biases might have crept in.

Szabo and Lent present much of their information as haphazardly as they seem to have gathered it. A full-page chart entitled "Top International Cartoonists As Chosen by Their Peers" does not state the artist's first names or list the number of votes they received, and the editors do not say why they assigned some multi-talented artists to particular genres. ("Barks"—I assume they mean Carl Barks—is listed behind Mordillo as an animator.) The same chart features someone called "Davis," with a bland footnote saying the authors did not know whether voters meant Jack Davis or Jim Davis, so they lumped them together!

Not all of *Cartoonometer* is so frustrating. The eighty cartoons include samples of several artists I would like to see more of, including Pavel Botezato of Rumania, Vladimir Kazanevsky of Ukraine and Antonio Moreira Antunes of Portugal. Among the interviews, Frank Miller mounted a refreshingly blunt attack on comic book censorship, and Thomas Lionar and his fellow Indonesian G.M. Sudarta provided some between-the-lines glimpses into the uneasy role of the editorial cartoonist in a quasi-dictatorship. Even the survey found itself on firmer ground when it switched from pocketbooks and popularity polls to the broad issues of life as a cartoonist. But though that section was firmer, it was also flatter: It should not take thousands of questionnaires and hours of numbers-crunching to figure out that more people become cartoonists for personal satisfaction (195) than for money (57).

Szabo and Lent have provided a few, too-brief glimpses of some talented artists who ought to be better known in this country. But they do not have the data they need to support the comparisons and generalizations they want to make. Instead of scaling back their project or abandoning it entirely, they have proceeded to set up a lecture and slide show, complete with charts and tables calibrated down to the decimal point, hoping nobody notices the podium they are standing on is made of thin air.

Joe Szabo and John A. Lent. *Cartoonometer: Taking the Pulse of the World's Cartoonists.* WittyWorld Books. 1994. 124 p. ISBN 0-9621600-6-0 pbk. $27.95

Popeye: An Illustrated History of E.C. Segar's Character in Print, Radio, Television and Film Appearances, 1929-1993

by Fred M. Grandinetti

Reviewed by William Janocha

Anyone in this country who is even remotely aware of popular culture must know of Popeye the Sailor. Yet I doubt anyone admires or has greater knowledge of the one-eyed sailor than Fred Grandinetti, co-founder of the International Popeye Fan Club.

This is primarily a film book. The "In Print" chapter contains very limited coverage of cartoonist Elzie Segar and his syndicated newspaper comic strip. Surely one of the author's reasons for structuring his book in this way is that revealing profiles of Segar and reprints of his 1920s-1930s work are available in previous collections such as *The Complete E.C. Segar Popeye* by Rick Marschall, *Thimble Theatre, Introducing Popeye* by Bill Blackbeard, and British import *Popeye, The 60th Anniversary Collection* edited by Mike Higgs.

Adequate biographies of the strip's stable of artists are presented and illustrated, but the work of one-time Segar assistant Bud Sagendorf is absent. One need only seek out his delightful and highly visual 1979 book *Popeye, His First Fifty Years* to obtain what is missing here. Grandinetti plans for a future book to reprint extensively the stories of Segar's successors, and any omissions in the current volume will surely be explored there.

The author's accounts of Popeye on film and television are comprehensive, and here the book excels. A 1938 article from *Foto* magazine is resurrected, recounting the exacting methods the Fleischer Studio used in producing their films. Another highlight is the well-researched chapter on "The Voices Behind The Faces" that gives revealing biographies of Jack Mercer and William Costello (Popeye), Mae Questel (Olive), and Jackson Beck (Bluto/Brutus). Even better is Fleischer animator Gordon Sheehan's priceless account of the methods and spirit of the Fleischer organization: wage factors, breakdown of working assignments and sequence, the habits and spirit of the animators, and an analysis of how changes in the 1940s hastened the end of an era. The "Popeye On Film" chapter alone is worth the price of the book.

Credit is due the author for documenting Popeye's television cartoons, for previous historians have pronounced the character dead after his last theatrical film in 1957. Grandinetti acknowledges and documents every release from 1933-1983 with episode guides, studios, and succinct plot descriptions comprising the most definitive listing extant. Numerous still photos illuminate this section, but like many of the book's black and white graphics, the quality is uneven, ranging from poor to excellent. The two-color cover's design and typography are uninspired; an unfortunate oversight. Popeye truly deserved something with a lot more "punch!"

For the collector, there is a list of 1950s-1960s Popeye books, records and merchandise. Those interested in a virtually complete catalog of postwar items should seek out Grandinetti's previous book, *Popeye: The Collectible*, published by Krause Publications in 1990.

The author's intent is more documentation than speculation; recapitulation rather than analysis. Perhaps that is just how Popeye would want it, for his claim "I yam what I yam and that's all I yam" is straightforward and true. That is what this book is, and dedicated Popeye fans will welcome it into their libraries. ●

Fred N. Grandinetti. *Popeye: An Illustrated History of E.C. Segar's Character in Print, Radio, Television and Film Appearances, 1929-1993.* McFarland. 1994. 276 p. index. ISBN 0-89950-982-7 pap. $32.50

A funny and violent example from the strip. E.C. Segar. *Thimble Theatre*,15 March 1935.

WRING NECK LIKE CHICKEN-
YOU BE DEAD NOW
CRACK
CRACK
CRACK
OH, HAW! HAW! LOOK AT NECK-HE DIE QUICK SOON
WELL, BLOW ME DOWN! HE BROKE ME NECK
CRACK
AHOY, CASTOR, GET ME A BROOM TO SHOVE DOWN ME BACK- ME NECK'S ALL BUSTED
OH, OUCH, MY CHIN! BREAK HIM NECK NO MATTER OH, OUCH!

video review

Running Mate: Gender and Politics in the Editorial Cartoons

by Elaine K. Miller

Reviewed by Sandy Northrop

In her introduction, producer and on-camera host Elaine Miller, an associate professor at State University of New York at Brockport, states that the purpose of *Running Mate: Gender and Politics in the Editorial Cartoons* is to examine the "response of political cartoonists to [Geraldine] Ferraro's [1984 vice presidential] candidacy: how they approached her, what images they used and how their cartoons relied on and occasionally challenged traditional gender roles." *Running Mate* is clearly an academic analysis meant for the classroom. But so few videos or films have been made on editorial cartoons or the subjects they tackle, that Miller's work makes a valuable contribution to what has been a barren field.

The editorial cartoons shown in the program demonstrate how candidate Ferraro suffered all the predictable hits a cartoonist's arsenal holds for women in the news. She is depicted as everything from a domineering housewife to a whore. "None of my accomplishments were shown," Ferraro comments. "I was a lawyer, a member of U.S. House of Representatives . . ." Many cartoonists chose to depict Walter Mondale and Geraldine Ferraro as a *married couple* rather than members of a *team*, demeaning both by that portrayal.

Running Mate lasts forty-seven minutes and is divided into three segments: a review of the cartoons about Ferraro from the 1984 presidential campaign; individual interviews with cartoonists Signe Wilkinson, *Philadelphia Daily News*, Tom Toles, *Buffalo News*, and M.G. Lord, *Newsday*, who each talk broadly about being cartoonists; and an interview with Geraldine Ferraro in which she comments on the cartoons of the 1984 campaign. Unfortunately each section of *Running Mate* plays as a separate piece. I wish the program intercut these three elements rather than following a rather plodding, linear format, since the ability to juxtapose images is one of video's greatest strengths. Sadly, none of the cartoons displayed in the first part are the work of the cartoonists interviewed in the second part. The viewer would have been better served by interviews with those cartoonists whose work is shown, allowing them to defend and comment on their approach.

While every editorial cartoon enthusiast will enjoy the interviews with Lord, Wilkinson, and Toles, Lord is the only one to address substantively the issue at hand: how Geraldine Ferraro was represented or misrepresented in cartoon coverage. Lord explains the challenge it was for her as one of a handful of woman cartoonists, "I was a cheerleader, I wasn't neutral." Signe Wilkinson, on the other hand, is not even questioned about the significance of Ferraro's representation and instead responds to questions about being a woman editorial cartoonist. Both Wilkinson's and Toles' responses to the time-honored, predictable questions about their profession would best be saved for another video.

Running Mate presents the editorial cartoons in a manner their creators will appreciate: each is shown full-screen and, with the exception of one animation, no video effects are used to enhance or distort the cartoon. In doing so, the program brings to our attention one of the biggest problems of trying to put cartoons on video: they are difficult—often impossible—to read. With each new cartoon, I found myself creeping closer to the television trying to read the cartoon.

Although *Running Mate* is too long and too episodic, it is not without insightful comments and occasional humor. It can be an effective tool in the classroom to generate debate on both the impact of editorial cartoons and the problem of gender stereotyping in the medium. ●

Elaine K. Miller. *Running Mate: Gender and Politics in the Editorial Cartoons.* First Run/Icarus Films. 1993. 47 min. Color video $375.00; video rental $75.00

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COMPILED BY DAVID SIMS

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Except with prior arrangement, the maximum length for a submission is twenty double-spaced typed pages, excluding notes and illustrations. Initial submissions must be accompanied by photocopies of the illustrations the author proposes to use. Captions should be typed directly on the photocopies at the bottom of the pages. In no instance should original artwork be submitted.

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Basic endnote style is as follows:

1. Rebecca Zurier, *Art for The Masses* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988), 89. [Note that no abbreviation preceeds the page numbers.]

2. Alice Sheppard, "There Were Ladies Present: American Women Cartoonists and Comic Artists in the Early Twentieth Century," *Journal of American Culture* 7(Fall 1984): 38-48.

3. Bill Blackbeard and Martin Williams, eds. *The Smithsonian Collection of Newspaper Comics* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1977), 12.

4. George Newton Gordon, "Can Children Corrupt Our Comics?" in *The Funnies: An American Idiom* (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1963), 158-166.

5. Edwin McDowell, "America Is Taking Comic Books Seriously," *New York Times*, 31 July 1988, E8.

Style for second references:

1. Zurier, *Art for the Masses*, 66.

2. Sheppard, "There Were Ladies Present," 44.

3. Gordon, "Can Children Corrupt Our Comics?" 164.

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